COMPUTER

STATE

NOTES

MIDNIGHT NOTES $1.50

tools: This issue was put together with 'real' typewriter time literally "begged, borrowed or stolen" and with lay-out materials and methods that were current in the Reformation. It was laid-out right across the street from M.I.T., about a half a mile from Harvard and next door from the numerous software and bio-engineering firms of Cambridge. I.e., it was produced while the micro-processers, mini-computers and main frames slept right around us. It is a materialization of our present (and collective) defeat, so treat it with charity.

orthography: According to the theorem of "Prolog to the Use of Machines", capital's reluctance to increase the width of the channel of communicative capacity and its desire to speed-up the rate of transmission have forced it to try to radically reduce the entropy of language (the diversity of script, multiple spellings, variable capitalization, etc.) and make communication less surprising, more predictable and less 'personal'. So we see our 'mistakes" as slips of rebellion, little refusals to standardize and Capitalize the Embodiment of our Language. Hope you do, too.

credits: Asin (Carl Harp), who drew the 'strange loop" on page 24, died in Walla Walla prison last year. Like many others, he was "found hung" in his cell.

PRIZE ESSAY CONTEST

The prize essay contest announced in Space Notes on the topic: "Why do we continue to eat capital's shit?" continues. We have yet to recieve a satisfactory answer; however, the old contest prize, $100, is now $108 to keep up with inflation.

Carnival in Bosstown

In the town where Cotton Mather's bones lay in peace, in the original home of the American Boss, Midnight Notes is having a carnival. Come for a gathering of our bodily powers, the passing of loosened words and whispers. Bring masks, paints, plays and music. The bosses' bones will turn. See you there.

Dates: April 17 and 18
Place: 125 Harvard St.
Cambridge, Ma.

Write Midnight Notes for maps and directions and help in finding sleeping space.

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then, I contradict myself.
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)

—Walt Whitman

Since the early nineteenth century with the famous Luddite riots, the working class movement has been debating whether mechanization is liberating or exploitative. This debate is very much alive in the movement today, especially in Europe since 1977. On the one side, the Autonomia-refusal-of-work tendency sees in technological development the hope for the final liberation of humanity for work; on the other side are alternativists of all sorts who, while not necessarily seeing the machine as an evil, are much more interested in understanding and reorganizing our social relations, everyday life and forms of creativity. From the point of view of the former, one of capital's greatest crimes today is in holding back the development of productive forces, of literally destroying a potentially available, high level of productivity because it is not profitable. (As the history of capitalism has shown, again and again, the increase of social wealth can be directly contradictory to the accumulation of value.) For the latter, instead, capital kills the Soul so to speak, for though, and even because, it may provide a high level of technological development, "scientific wonders" and/or remarkable "material" (or what usually passes as material) wellbeing, it creates a world of "dead Souls": Alienation, Loss of Animal Spirits, Desire to Die, desensitization.

Are these mutually exclusive trends? Are we forced to choose between them?

For capitalist development, of course, there is no contradiction between the paths of increasing mechanization and continuing to profit from archaic forms of production by lengthening the work day (killing the Soul and/or the Body). They are but two complementary paths of appropriating surplus time. Mechanization decreases the necessary work time and so increases the ratio of surplus to necessary work, while lengthening the work day simply increases surplus labor tout court. In fact, in order to accumulate the capital necessary to introduce mechanization the work day must be increased somewhere. But this "somewhere" need not be in the same place.

In the "First Great Industrial Revolution" (or better counter-revolution), during which our Luddite ancestors broke into history, the surplus labor time was taken directly out of those workers whose work was mechanized. Not only did the Manchester operatives work with machines but they worked longer and more intensively than previous generations of non-mechanized textile workers. This need not always be the case. Thus the introduction of Atomic Power Plants and Computerized Factories need not, and will not, be "financed" out of the hides of atomic physicists and programmers (though maybe they should!) They are undoubtedly being capitalized by the increased surplus value transferred

to these highly mechanized sectors from the spheres of "shit work" being done in the kitchens, restaurants, basements, sweatshops around the world. Capital has its technocratic and "romantic" sides but their antithesis is bogus: they merely provide models for complementary forms of accumulation. The trick of the capitalist (the so-called "entrepreneurial spirit") is simply to find the right mixture.

But if capital is not forced to choose between the Machine and the Hand, the Soul and the Body why should we?

Capital is flexible, it has a Standard with which to determine its best model of production on the basis of the surplus work it generates. It is neither technocratic nor anti-technocratic, neither liberal nor fascist, not addicted to whisky nor cocaine. This is its historical power: to remain true to itself while shifting with the tides of class force.

What has grown in the last five years, through all the misery of the crisis, all the state terror, all our despair, has been the increasing sophistication and richness with which our standard is being developed and applied. Our standard is quite simple: the refusal of work and its reduction to a minimum. But the application of this standard is far from simple: the European movement (quite self-consciously) and the American movement (where practice is light years ahead of theory as usual) have taken afew steps beyond Marx's description of the immediate post-Luddite period. "It took both time and experience before the workpeople learnt to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and to direct their attacks not against the material instruments of production, but against the mode in which they are used." In the century since Marx, we have seen that the simple formula "Execute the capitalists, Operate the machines" is inadequate for two reasons. First, capital has literally "booby trapped" many machines in such a way that their only form of operation is capitalistic: the nuclear industry and the stockpiled nuclear bombs are fine examples. Not only can they not be used now except capitalistically, but there is no obvious way of getting rid of them non-capitalistically. Second, "previous invisible sectors" of the working class have pointed out that forms of mechanical production that appear to reduce work merely shift work onto less powerful class sectors. Elements of the women's movement have been crucial to this realization, for the typically more "powerful and advanced" technological class sectors are male and thus they rarely take into account the fact that every form of production requires an enormous amount of reproductive work, usually female. What can appear as reduction of work through mechanization may lead to so much trauma,

tension and breakdown in the immediate workers and environment that the work of reproducing those workers and environment increases tremendously. Capital's form has so melded with the instruments of production that the preferred tool of Revolutionary Surgery must become the Laser.

The growth of analytic power has gone through the tributary of struggles marked by Italy in 1977, the anti-nuke and energy price revolts of 1978-79 in the U.S. and Europe, the Space Wars in Zurich of 1980, and the anti-police, anti-military riots in England, Holland and Germany in 1981. These nodes of conflict forced the movement into confrontation with itself as well as with capital; they forced us to sharpen up our standard. Each of these moments brought into the struggle against capital new social strata, new mixtures and social possibilities, but always presented us with contradictory impulses with respect to technology. On the one side, elements of the movement argued for "pushing" the system to intensify its technological development in order to further reduce the necessary labor time in production and thus increase the potential social wealth (free time). On the other side, there has been a demand for new social forms to fulfil our desires now, to experience in all its richness, the social being and relationships approriate to a working class on the way out of the capitalist era. Is this a looming contradiction between the new "forces" and "relations" of social production? Is the Revolutionary Body- and Soul at odds? No, not with any finality, because they are interwoven expressions of the refusal of work. However, in the concrete struggle, tensions exist.

Take the Zurich movement of the last two years. Though Zurich is a monetary center supreme, where the "dominance of formal over real society" was apparently total, packets of alternativists, punks and high-tech personnel melted and exploded in its center. In a city where "the work of most people is language, mostly figures" the movement used the crudest (physical blockage, appropriation and escape) to the most refined (ironic sabotage of TV, telephonic and computational transmission) methods to undermine this language-work. But a capitalist "pull out" from Zurich in response to the struggle would put the alliance of work refusers to the test. For though the alternativists might welcome the chance to introduce a new "human-centered" form of production/reproduction, large sections of the working class will, if given a choice, stick with capital and the state with "its" technology unless the technological wealth of the last half millenium can be reintegrated into the new social mode.

These are the contradiction and questions that Midnight Notes receives and transmits to the movement. Thus "Strange Victories" and "No Future Notes" (vol. 1, n.1,2) argued that the class composition of the anti-nuke movement in the U.S. inevitably limited the demands and depth of action against capital's crisis Plan. No "strange loop" was being fashioned by the movement in order to "tangle" the class hierarchies because it remained and remains to this day a movement essentially of

the "upper" workers. Thus, the main proposal of the movement, "the solar transition", is invariably offered up with an austerity rhetoric telling us that we are "overconsuming" and, in Tom Hayden's words, discovering that "people have a basic need for real work." It might be very well for Mr. Hayden and his friends who spend their time talking about work but have managed to get away pretty nicely from doing it. But this simply will not do for the blacks, hispanics, women, immigrants, assembly line workers, miners and youth of this country. They have worked too much already and have consumed to little of life! Atleast Reagan offers wealth and less work for a few "lucky ones", Hayden envisions "socially useful" drudgery for all: his vision is a vision of work without end, not of the end of work. But this is by no means an isolated mistake, rather this pro-work, pro-austerity line is an underlying unity between elements of the anti-nuke movement and proponents of labor intensive capitalist development. This resulted in the inability to shape a "strange loop" between the white riot of Levittown, the black riot of Miami and the anti-nuke demos of 1979-80. The social vacuum thus created added a huge force to the Reagan initiative.

On the eve of the Reagan election in "Work/Energy Crisis and the Apocalypse" (MN, vol.2, n. 1) we tried to decode the crisis plan of capital by deducting out all the apocalyptic rhetoric about "Nature's limits" to see the refusal of work as the driving force of the Crisis. In doing so, we revealed capitalist science as both a tool of planning to overcome the refusal of work and a continuing reflection of capitalist crises.

Then in "Space Notes" (MN vol.2, n.2) we brought the movement of the 'dyssatisfied'in Zurich and Northern Europe into focus. They form one of the first decisive struggles of this period because they operate outside the job and emphasize the question of 'life style': how and where living is to be done, the wages and working conditions of life. Through their informational guerrilla they have shown that capital's attempt to mimic all social relations as relations between money can be defeated and continually exposed.

In this issue we continue the exploration of capital's use of science and technology in its plan to overcome the crisis by the redefinitio, of work and the consequent attempt to create a new kind of worker and state. In "Prolog to the Use of Machines" we precisely define the transition the crisis embodies, a transition from work defined by repetitive heat engines to work defined by logical machines. But to work capitalistically with such a new system of machines a completely new form of worker must be created. "Mormons in Space" seeks to show that such a worker must be patterned after the most archaic form of the capitalist individual: the puritan of the period of primative accumulation. An interview with a government bureaucrat in "A Demon Speaks" reveals the   form of the state necessitated by the transition to the new mode of work and the   problems and contradictions it results in. "Strange Loops: Reagan in Zurich" sketches a scenario of struggle that is based on the recent Northern European confrontations which bring together a composition

Mormons in Space

If one tried to define the _Zeitgeist_ breathing through the New Right today one would be confronted with a seemingly undecipherable puzzle. On the one side these are the spokesmen for a scientific and technological revolution that a few years ago would have smacked of science fiction: gene-splicing, DNA computers, time-compression techniques, space colonies. At the same time the circles of the New Right have witnessed a revival of religious tendencies and moral conservatism that one would have thought was buried once and for all with "our" Puritan Founding Fathers. Falwell's Moral Majority is the most vocal of this return to the values of Calvin and Cotton Mather, but by far not the only one. Wherever you turn, God-fearing-Satan-minded groups, determined to reshape the country on the model of the Puritan colonies, are sprawling like mushrooms: Christian Voice, Pro-Family Forum, National Prayer Campaign, Eagle Forum, Right to Life Commission, Fund to Restore an Educated Electorate, Institute for Christian Economics. Seen in its general contours, then, the body of the New Right seems stretching in two opposite directions, attempting at once a bold leap into the past and an equally bold leap into the future.

The puzzle increases when we realise that these are not separate sects, but in more than one way they involve the same people and the same money. Despite a few petty squabbles and a few pathetic contortions to keep up the "pluralism" facade, the hand that sends the shuttle into orbit or recombines mice and rabbits is the same that is fretfully pushing for gays to be sent to the stake and is drawing a big cross not just through the 20th, but the 19th and 18th centuries too.

To what extent the Moral Majority and Co. and the science futurologists are one soul, one mission, is best seen, if not in the lives of their individual spokesmen (though the image of the 'electronic minister' and of a President who in the same breath blesses God and calls for stepped up nerve gas production and the neutron bomb are good evidence of this marriage), then in the harmony of intent they display when confronted with the 'key issues' of the time. When it comes to economic and political matters, all shreds of difference drop off and both souls of the New Right pull money and resources towards their common goals. Free-Market, _laissez-faire_ economics

(for business, of course), the militarization of the country (what is called "building a strong military defense"), bolstering "internal security", i.e., giving the FBI and CIA free rein to police our daily life, cutting all social spending except that devoted to building prisons and ensuring that thousands will fill them; in a word, asserting U.S. capital's ownership of the world and setting "America" to work at the minimum wage (or below) are goals for which all the New Right would swear on the Bible.

A clue to understanding the double soul of the New Right is to realise that its mixture of reactionary social policies and scientific boldness is not a novelty in the history of capitalism. If we look at the beginning of capital--the 16th and 17th century to which the Moral Majority would so happily return--we see a similar situation in the countries of the "take off". At the very time when Galileo was pointing his telescope to the moon, and Francis Bacon was laying the foundations of scientific rationality, women and gays by the thousands were burnt on the stake throughout Europe, with the universal blessing of the modernizing (sic) European intelligentsia.

A sudden craze? An inexplicable fall into barbarism? In reality, the witch hunt was part and parcel of that attempt at "human perfectibility" that is commonly acknowledged as the dream of the fathers of modern rationalism. For the thrust of the emerging capitalist class towards the domination and exploitation of nature would have remained a dead letter without the concomitant creation of a new type of individual whose behavior would be as regular, predictable and controllable as that of the newly discovered natural laws. To achieve this purpose one had to destroy that magical conception of the world that, e.g., made the Indians in the overseas colonies believe that it was a sacrilege to mine the earth, or in the heart of Europe assured the proletariat that people could fly, be in two places at the same time, divine the future and (most important) that on some 'unlucky days' all enterprise had to be carefully avoided. The witch hunt, moreover, ensured the control over the main source of labor, the _woman's body_, by criminalizing abortion and all forms of contraception as a crime against the state. Finally, the witch hunt was functional to the reorganization of family life, i.e., the restructuring of reproduction that accompanied the reorganization

Do I Contradict Myself?

of workers formed by the transition of the crisis. In our article on Attica 1981, one decade after the massacre, we are reminded that the price of our failure is not a 'coming apocalypse' but a present and continuing misery, yet even in the jailed depths of this misery is the deepest

breath of struggle. And finally, after all our at times abstruse analyses and arguments, we end in "Who Will Save the Savior?" with a reminder:

DON'T
GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS
ANY LONGER

of work on a capitalistic basis. On the stake died the adulteress, the woman of 'ill repute', the lesbian, the woman who lived alone, or lacked 'maternal spirit' or had illegitimate children. On the stake ended many beggars, who had impudently launched their curses against the refusal of some "ale and bread". For in the 'transition' to capitalism it was primarily the woman, especially the woman in rebellion, (destined to depend on a man for her survival) who became pauperised. The fathers of modern rationalism approved; some even complained that the state did not go far enough. Notoriously, Bodin insisted that the witches should not be 'mercifully' strangled before being given to the flames.

That today we find a similar situation prevailing in the U.S.A. is an indication of the depth of capital's crisis. Always, in its beginning as, we would hope, in its end, when uncertain of its foundations, capital goes down to basics. At present this means attempting a bold technological leap which on one side (at the developing pole of production) concentrates capital and automates work to an unprecedented degree and, on the other, consigns millions of workers to either wagelessness (unemployment) or to employment in intensive-labor types of jobs, paid at minimum rates, on the model of the much
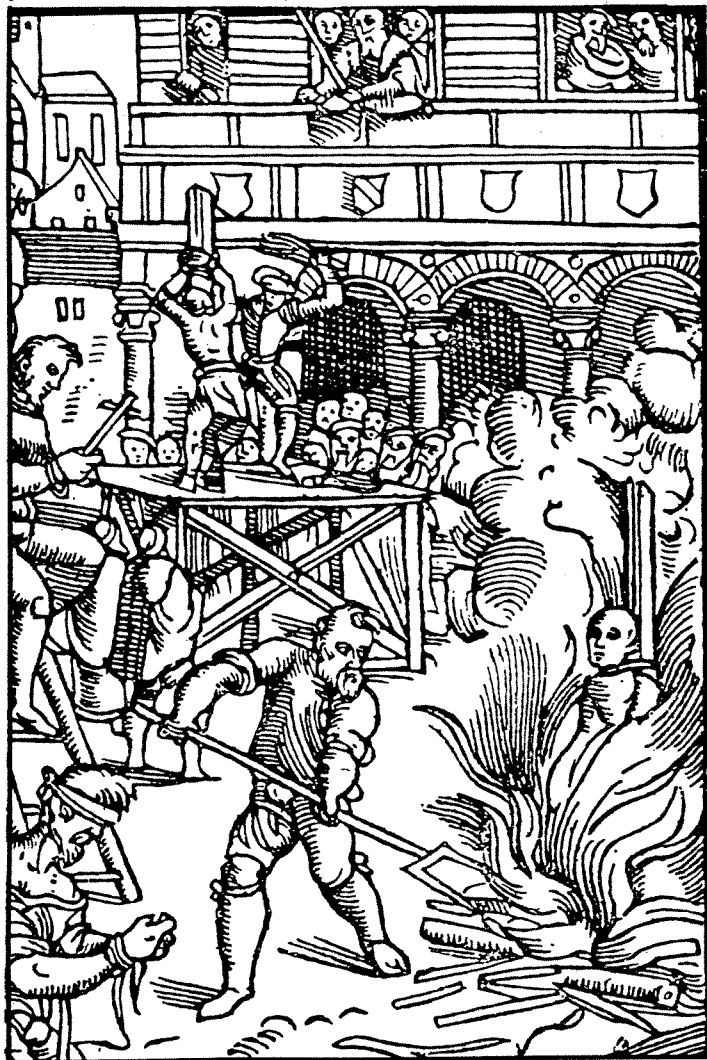
acclaimed 'free enterprise zones'. This involves, however, a reorganization of the process whereby labor is reproduced--a project in which women are expected to play a most crucial role.

The institutionalization of repression and self-discipline along the line of the Moral Majority and the New Christian Right is today required for both ends of the working class spectrum: For those who are destined to temporary, part-time subsistence level of wages (accompanied by long hours of work or a perennial quest for jobs) as well as for those who are elected to a "meaningful wage" working with the most sophisticated equipment capital's technologists are now able to produce. That the holy trinity of God/Work/Family is always crucial in times of repression is a well tested truth capital has never forgotten. What could be more productive than a life of isolation, where the only relations we have with each other are relations of reciprocal discipline: Daddy controlling Mommy, Mommy teaching the children that life is hard and survival problematic, neighbors getting together to keep the neighborhood 'clean', sociality shrinking to those occasions that help us find or keep a job??? And if life is pain there is always God, in whose name you can even justify nuclear war against the infidels who, like the rebellious Sodomites, deserve to be wiped out from the face of the earth (even if a few of the righteous get wiped out too). And you can even justify a nuclear war that will wipe out yourself too, for after all what is the big deal about life, if you have already accepted to bargain cancer for a wage, renounce all your desires and postpone your fulfilment to another world?

Let us not be mistaken. Haig needs Jerry Falwell, as does Stockman. From Wall Street to the Army, all capital's utopias are predicated on an infinitesimal micropolitics at the level of the body, curbing our animal spirits and redefining the meaning of that famous Pursuit of Happiness that (so far at least) has been the biggest of all constitutional lies. And Jerry Falwell is even more needed for the development of the high tech (computer, information, energy, genetic) worker who, unlike those at the lower echelons of the working class, cannot be run by the stick (in case God failed), for the damage he can do (should he slip in his duty) is infinitely greater because the machines he works with are infinitely more costly.

What the launching of high tech industry needs mostly today is a technological leap in the human machine--a big evolutionary step creating a new type of worker to match capital's investment needs. What are the faculties required by the new being our futurologists advocate? A look at the debate on space colonies is revealing in this respect. All agree, first of all, that the main impediment today to the development of human colonies in space is bio-social rather than technological, i.e., you may be able to glue the space shuttle's tiles together but glueing the right space worker-technician is a project that even the present genetic breakthroughs are far from having solved. An individual is needed who can:
--endure social isolation and sensory deprivation

for long periods of time without breaking down,
--perform 'perfectly' in an extremely hostile/
  alien and artificial environment and under
  enormous stress,
--achieve a superb control of his bodily functions
  (consider: it takes an hour to shit in space!)
  and psychological reactions (anger, hate,inde-
  cisiveness), our all-too-human frailties which
  can be disastrous in the fragile, vulnerable
  world of life in space,
--demonstrates total obedience, conformity and
  receptivity to commands, for there can be little
  tolerance for social deviations and disagreements
  when the most minute act of sabotage can have
  catastrophic consequences to the very costly,
  complex and powerful equipment entrusted in their
  hands.
Indeed, not only will the space technician have a
quasi-religious relation to his machine but he
himself must become more and more machine-like,
acheiving a perfect symbiosis with his computer
which, in the long nights of space, is often his
only and always his most reliable guide, his com-
panion, his buddy, his friend.

    The space worker, then, must be a highly ascetic
type, pure in body and soul, perfect in his per-
formance, obedient like a well wound clock and
extremely fetishistic in his mental modes. Where
is this gem most likely bred? In a fundamentalist
type religious sect. To put it in the words of
biologist Garrett Harding:

    What group would be most suitable to this most
    recent Brave New World (the space colony)?
    Probably a religious group. There must be
    unity of thought and the acceptance of
    discipline. But the colonists couldn't be a
    bunch of Unitarians or Quakers, for these
    people regard the individual conscience
    as the best guide to action. Space colonies'
    existence would require something more like
    the Hutterites or the Mormons for its inhab-
    itants...integration could not be risked on
    this delicate vessel, for fear of sabotage and
    terrorism. Only 'purification' would do.
Not surprisingly, a few days after landing, the
space shuttle astronauts were greeted by Elder
Neal Maxwell at the Mormon Tabernacle. "We honor
tonight men who have seen God in all his majesty
and power," he said and the 6000 member congre-
gation responded, "Amen."

    But--we hear the objection--if these religious
dinosaurs are the best allies of science fiction
capitalism, why do they feud among each other,
as it has recently happened in the creationism
versus evolution legal debate? Isn't this a sign
that even today there is a war between science
and religion?? Not quite. The creationists do not
necessarily object to Darwinism as a theory--
after all, a biblical day can be millions or
billions of years long; neither do they object
to the technology of gene splicing, for the Book
saith:

    And God blessed them, and God said unto them,
    Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the
    earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over
    the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the
    air, and over every living thing that moveth
    upon the earth.
    The real problem with evolutionary theory is
strictly one of social control, particularly in

Rev. Falwell came to L.A. in Nov. 1981. The Conven-
tion Center was hired and 3000 people were expect-
ed. With their usual care, using a computerized
mailing, the Moral Majority succeeded in keeping
Falwell's arrival an open secret, though thousands
knew he was coming they were the 'right ones'!
Electronic preachers never want to meet the _devils_
in the flesh. But here the Leak occurred. An emplo-
yee of the Center leaked the news to the gay com-
munity only three days before the dinner. How
could an effective action be raised against him
quickly? Luckily there was a Charlie Murphy con-
cert on the night of the leak, Falwell's visit
was announced at the concert and at midnight a
group got together with only two principles: any
one making a suggestion should be prepared to
carry it out; though each task group ran accord-
ing to consensus, the action decisions of the
task groups were binding on the larger group. They
agreed the demo should look good to the media AND
be fun for the demonstrators. The people coming
to the demo were asked to bring large pink tri-
angles and just afew banners like "BEWARE OF PRO-
PHETS". So there was a carefully prepared backdrop
behind the two spokespeople, a man and a woman in
gold headbands. The demonstrators were there _for_
the fun, to sing alot of new songs, dance and play
with a beauty of bodies and faces to show the pass-
ing Falwell diners there was an attractive alter-
native not out to eat them. By the way, though
the dinners were free and Falwell invested $40,000,
he got back $200,000. The profits are going to his
latest project: a huge "Tomb for the Unborn". Some
of the demonstrators also went to dinner and now
are on his mailing list: Falwell Beware, the Chan-
nel Widens.

its application to children, the future genera-
tion of workers, who notoriously dislike disci-
pline, have "little understanding" and are thus
prone to draw the "wrong" conclusions from the
realisation that we come from the apes. As
Rev. Curtis Thom says:

    I wonder if the fact that in classrooms now
    kids are being taught that everything evolved
    from a natural order, if that has some effect
    on the students' minds, that "Well, I'm not
    responsible to a creator?" If students under-
    stand that there may be a creation with a
    creator it could possibily make a child
    think that "If I did come from a creator,
    then perhaps I am responsible to that
    creator and before I violate somebody's
    rights, I'd better remember that I am
    responsible to somebody."
Similarly, when the head of the Creation Science
Legal Fund was questioned in California as to his
objections to evolution he replied that it
reduces a child's respect for his elders because
they were 'closer to the apes"!

    "Evolution spawns a disrespect for authority,
for moral values and for God himself," claims
the author of a fundamentalist physical science
text book, affiliated with Bob Jones University.
"It destroys man by convincing him he is a mere
accident of nature, a clever animal at best."

    We may smile at the directness and naivete
of these statements. Yet, they reflect an
unadulterated acknowledgement of what are the
foundations of capital's rule. A worldly sceptic-

ism may be tolerable--even advisable--in a well trained adult. But when it comes to children, nothing can be as effective as the fear of God, Hell and Damnation to give them a proper and life-long mold. The future workers, whether they will deal with computers or a broom, must be formed in the cradle, and breaking their will in the good, old time puritan fashion is a sine qua non condition of awakening their moral instincts. Instilling fear of God's wrath--the main concern of the creationists--is only the first step. To make the message clear, physical terror is conveniently added. Not all fundamentalists have gone as far as that minister in the Southwest who teaches catechism with the help of an electric chair, convinced that an electric shock administered every time God's name is pronounced is the best means to imprint its memory in the child. "Doing away with the 'permissivism' in child rearing," it is called, which is but a ferocious determination to breakdown the child. (This is a constant, obsessive theme of the New Christian Right.) The reintroduction of corporal punishment in the school and its complete legitimisation in the family is openly demanded, e.g., by the Family Protection Act which even proposes to cut all funds from any agency asserting the right of the child to defend him or herself from the violence of their parents and authorities. Thus recently, in Pennsylvania, when a child brutalised by his parents was placed by a center in a foster home, the local Moral Majority chapter went to court claiming that whipping was approved by the Bible, provided the child does not die.

The fight between creationism and evolutionism, then, is just an internal capitalist squabble as to what are the most adequate means of control. Until our social biologists and genetic engineers --the heros of today's scientific breakthrough-- have found the means to create a perfect robot, the whip will do, particularly in an age still infected with the anarchic ideologies of the 60s, when a lot of bad germs have already been implanted in children and parents alike.

Moreover, the asceticism, self control, the flight from the earth and the body which is the substance of puritan teaching, is the best soil in which capital's scientific and economic plans can flourish. Indeed, today, more consciously than ever, in its attempt to relocate itself on safer shores, capital is embracing the dream of all religion: the overcoming of all physical boundaries, the reduction of the individual human being to an angel-like creature, all soul and will. In the creation of the electronic/ space worker, the priest of scientific exploration-exploitation of the universe, capital is fighting once again its historic battle against matter, attempting to break at once both the boundaries of the earth and the boundaries of "human nature" which, in its present form, present irreducible limits that must be overcome.

The thrust to the organization of industries in space and the dematerialization of the body go together. For the former cannot be accomplished without the remolding of a whole nexus of needs, wishes, desires, that are the product of billions of years of material evolution on the planet and which up to now have been the material conditions of bio-social reproduction--

the blues, the greens, the nipple, the balls, the hair of the anus, the texture of oranges, beef, carrots, the wind and sea smell, the day light, the need for physical contact, SEX!!! The dangers of sexuality are emblematic of the obstacles capital encounters in the attempt to create a totally self-controlled being, capable of spending nights and nights alone, talking just to his computer, with his mind focused on nothing but the screen. Can you afford to be horny or lonely in space? Can you afford to be jealous or have a marital breakdown??

What's the right attitude in this respect is indicated by a report on the South Pole Station in Antartica that ostensibly was set up to study meteorological, astronomical and geographical conditions at the pole, but in reality is a big center for human experimentation: the study of human beings in conditions approaching that of space (isolation for many months, lack of a sensuous contact, etc.) This report states:

As for sexual relations...all candidates were warned of the 'dangers' of sexual liaisons under the supercharged conditions here. Celibacy was the best course...men think of nothing but sex for the first few weeks, then it is submerged until nearly the end of the winter. One worker reported, 'You just basically put it out of your mind. You are working all the time; there is no privacy.'

Celibacy, abstinence: it is the last step in a long process whereby increasingly capital has decreased the sensuous-sexual content of our lives and encounters with people, substituting the mental image to the physical touch. Centuries of capitalist discipline have gone a long way

DINOSAURIC BATTLES

Ironically, in their struggle to subvert the absolutism of the scientific educators, the creationists took up a kind of "methodological anarchism" and claimed for "creation science" a relativistic status, i.e., as a theory among others with pluses and minuses (as every theory has!). As the professional scientists huffed and puffed about Arkansas Act 590 of 1981, the 'equal treatment' act, they failed to take up a possibility the Act offered, viz., an opportunity to question the absolute value of science itself. When S.J. Gould so self-rightously inveighed: "scientific creationism was a 'ruse' to purvey religion (and a narrow sectarian concept of religion at that) in science classrooms," he might have wondered whether the method of teaching science "in the classroom" now is as absolutist as the "sectarian" form he so openly despises! A curriculum including a number of theories (why stop with the creation story) might very well have brought to the fore the question: what makes the present theory so right? What about alternatives? Judge Overton, who ruled against the creationists, was more worried about the consequences of the loss of authority of both science and religion if mixed, for then the kids could see the authoritarianism of both. That would be letting too much of the stage machinery show at too tender an age.

toward producing individuals who shrink from
others for fear of touch. (See the way we live
our social spaces: buses, trains, each passenger
closed in its own space, its own body, keeping
well defined, though invisible, boundaries;
each person its own castle.) This physical as
well as emotional isolation from each other is
the essence of capitalist cooperation. But it,
as well as the dematerialization of all forms
of our life, finds their culmination in the
inhabitant of the future space colony whose
success depends on his ability to become a
pure, totally purified, angel--who does not fuck,
does not require the sensuous stimulations
which are our daily nourishment on earth, but
can live by solely feeding on its self-sufficient,
self-centered will power.

Food as well goes out the window. Not even
hamburgers and french fries any longer, but de-
hydrated food, recycled urine and (why not?)
feces. Given the importance of oxygen and the
closed nature of the space pod, the control of
biological growth is essential to prevent dis-
eases; thus, waste must be recycled: eat your
own shit and drink your own piss. For what is
important is the "analytic diet" which is to
provide the standardized chemical ingredients
that the standard body needs in sufficient
quantities and rates. The form this diet takes
is not essential with the proviso that it must
be completely anticeptic in order not to infect
the surfaces of the space pod. Here is a
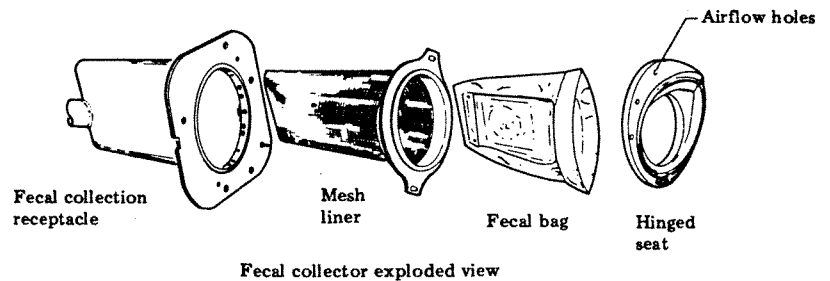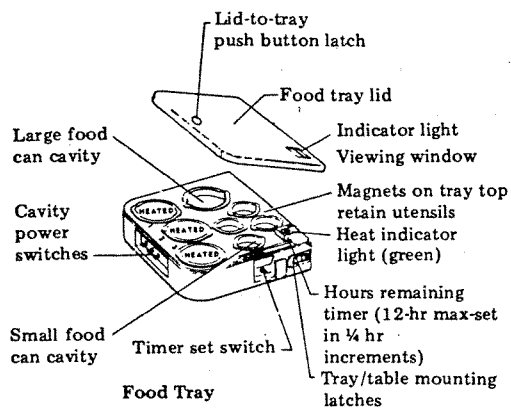description of space food since the Mercury
project days:

It's always been freeze-dried food which you
add water to reconstitute, or what are called
thermal-stablized foods, almost exactly the

same thing you would get in canned peaches
or pears, the type of food which don't need
to add water to, or in the case of Sky Lab we
also had about 10-15% of frozen foods, includ-
ing filet mignon, and lobster and roast pork
and vanilla ice cream for that matter.

So describes the happy astronaut: not far differ-
ent from "earth" food. What is sinister about
this menu is that much of our earth food is
already approaching this "ideal" and "heavenly"
food.

It is clear that the vanguard in popularizing
and developing this analytic diet on earth are
the fundamentalists and Mormons themselves who,
in preparation for the day of the Apocalypse,
have already organized large mail order houses
stocked with de-hydrated food, thermal-stabilized
food, canned foods as well as reserve gas tanks
and arms (to defend your fundamentalist hole
against commieefaggotlesbianblackdemons overlooked
in the day of Judgement by the omniscience of the
Lord). Their life-problematic is the same as that
of the space worker, as they are preparing to
survive for an indefinite period, surrounded by
a hostile, likely radioactive, environment as
well as remnants of enemy tribes. For example,
each Mormon or Latter-Day Saint, as they like to
call themselves, is ordained to have a years
supply of food on hand in readiness for the
Apocalypse.

Nuclear war and Apocalypse, flight to space
and flight underground, urine drinking in earth
as it is in Heaven: here Falwell and Weinberger
have a lot to tell each other, much information
to share, many clues to exchange...much recipro-
cal advice and enlightenment.

Food Tray

- Lid-to-tray push button latch
- Food tray lid
- Large food can cavity
- Indicator light
- Viewing window
- Cavity power switches
- Magnets on tray top retain utensils
- Heat indicator light (green)
- Hours remaining timer (12-hr max-set in ¼ hr increments)
- Small food can cavity
- Timer set switch
- Tray/table mounting latches

Food Tray

Fecal collector exploded view

- Airflow holes
- Fecal collection receptacle
- Mesh liner
- Fecal bag
- Hinged seat

Fecal collector exploded view

Not only are food and sex, but even the aggressive instinct, so to speak, is being dematerialized. No more hot hatred of a visible, dangerous enemy taking you by the throat or pointing his rifle at you. You must learn to kill a faceless enemy, a figure, a spot on a video screen plotted by your faithful computer. The training for this type of work comes from the contemporary video games--U.S./Japan style--which combine the abstractness of the opponent with the presence of your own self, undergoing attack, in the game. This, in fact, we are told, is the secret of their hypnotic power.

Increasing the abstractness of the enemy body, reducing the person you destroy to a blip on a video machine: this is an essential element of death production which is likely to be the central product of space industrialization. Indeed, electronic war can become so abstract that unless your image is put into the video screen you're likely to forget that you can be destroyed yourself. The abstractness of the object of aggression is the essence of the lesson that is being taught to fundamentalist youth, who from an early age are told that all 'deviants' are the same--perfectly interchangeable--as equal expressions of the abstract powers of evil.

Communism=Homosexuality=Drugs=Promiscuousness=Subversion=Terrorism=Lesbianism=...=Satan. From this point of view, all questions of "who", "what", "where" and "when" become irrelevant: a good practice for a politics of repression, and an excellent one for a policy of massive nuclear destruction, which requires building a type of being who can accept the destruction of millions of bodies as an unpleasant, perhaps, but nevertheless necessary goal to cleanse the earth from all social deviation and struggle--a pollution much worse in the eyes of the fundamentalist than strontium 90.

To achieve this, a strategy of systematic isolation is necessary: breaking all bonds between ourselves and others and distancing ourselves even from our own body. (See the sexless space suit which creates a virtual bulk against all contact with other bodies and your own as well: you won't even be able to masterbate in space!!) Isolation is the name of the game and the electronic-TV preacher is the true hero of this game. The old bible-belt evangelists put their hands on the sinners. True, it was in an assembly line fashion: here a cancer, there some blindness. But it still had some contact; even in large revival meetings one could see the body of the healer and the bodies of their fellow creatures, feel their heat. (Hence the potential for trouble.)

The electronic church completely dematerializes the healer, who becomes a cool image duplicated on thousands of screens or a 'personal' comment in a letter written by a computer. One's main 'feedback' with the preacher is the monetary one:
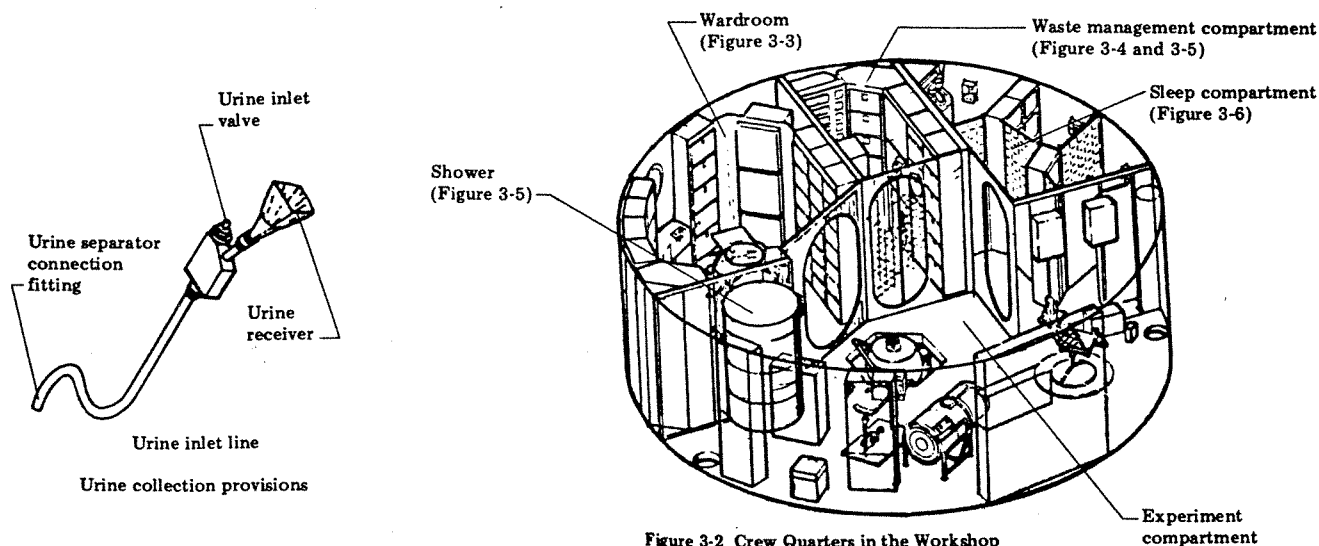
Urine inlet valve

Urine separator connection fitting

Urine receiver

Urine inlet line

Urine collection provisions

Shower (Figure 3-5)

Wardroom (Figure 3-3)

Waste management compartment (Figure 3-4 and 3-5)

Sleep compartment (Figure 3-6)

Experiment compartment

Figure 3-2 Crew Quarters in the Workshop

you send your money and he begins to pray for you. If you fall back on the payments, the prayers begin to lose their fervor until they end with the 'final notice'.

With the electronic preacher, social relations become so abstract that they are virtually substituted by an image. Interestingly enough, the followers of Falwell and Co. are mostly "southern" folks over 50 (there are about 10 million of them) for whom the radio-TV sermon serves the same function as the home computer for the high tech family: reproducing for you, in a purified-disembodied form, the relations/experiences of which you have been deprived in day-to-day life. They substitute dangerous, because unpredictable, human encounters with a gadget-produced sociality that can be turned off and shut down at will. It goes directly to the soul without passing through the body; clean, efficient, infinitely available at all hours of day and night. (In fact it can be recorded and replayed whenever you want--time, too, not only space, is won!!!)

The Jerry Falwells of the land are for the poor, white, old folks what the Atari cassette and Apple mini-computer are for the moneyed youngster: the final training in a fetishism that is to lead to a longed for symbiosis with the machine. Take Frank and Deirdra Patrick, an old couple living in a Bosstown suburb, who spend 30% of their income to support electronic ministers. Why? They cannot get out. Living in such a suburb there is no way you can move without a car, and the churches don't supply transportation much anymore--the state certainly won't. So, what the hell do you do? At least you get some contact. "What a racket!" we say. Its base, however, shows an essential tendency of capitalist development, that is presently reaching its peak. This is the tendency to break the limits of matter and dematerialize life in all its forms, beginning with social life, increasingly reduced to a machine-produced package of images that substitute, duplicate and cover up the (much more dangerous) real thing. TV games, TV sex, TV preachers, TV shopping, TV thinking, TV living and dying...

Living with the machine, becoming like a mach-

ine: a desexualized angel, moving in the interstices of the engine, perfectly integrating work-space and life space as in the astronauts' pod, infinitely weightless because purified of the force of gravity, of all human desires/temptations--the ancient refusal of work finally negated. Capital's old dream of "human perfectibility" that loomed so prominent in the 16th and 17th century utopias, from Bacon to Descartes, seems ready at hand. Not only can we now answer the famous Puritan question, "What do the angels do in heaven?" but we even know how they feel. Here it's Wally Shirra talking:

Feeling weightless...I don't know, it's so many things together. A feeling of pride, of healthy solitude, of dignified freedom from everything that's dirty, sticky. You feel exquisitely comfortable, that's the word for it, exquisitely...You feel comfortable and you feel you have so much energy, such an urge to do things, such an ability to do things. And you work well, yes, you think well, you move well, without sweat, without difficulty, as if the biblical curse In the sweat of thy face and in sorrow no longer exists. As if you've been born again.

How petty life on earth seems from such heights... Said the nurse of some of the first astronauts: Don't pay any attention to people who tell you they have such a wild look because of tension, of exhaustion, or joy at having made it. It's got nothing to do with these things. It's rage at having to come back to Earth. As if up there they're not only freed from weight, from the force of gravity, but from desires, affections, passions, ambitions, from the body.

No wonder capital is so careless with our earthly home, so eager to destroy it--the big bang of nuclear explosion--destroying in one second millions of tons of matter--the perfect embodiment of the victory of the spirit over the earth-matter--as creative as the first act of God! Big Bang Big Phallus reduced to its pure, power-hungry essence, fucking this rotting Earth in its god-like aspiration to be free from all constraints. Faust in an angel/astronaut/space-

worker face, a superman who does not need any-body, neither his own nor an other's, to have his will, not just on earth but in the universe as well.

So far however, few have reached this degree of perfection. If the human colonies project and industrialization in space must take off (by the mid-90s GM has calculated), the number of 'elects' must be drastically increased. As the alterna-tivist astronaut Russ Schweickart says:

I think that's some kind of gut reason that some people react against the space program—the feeling that here is a pristine environment and we can't take the present fallible human character up there. We've got to perfect our-selves before we enter this new domain.

Here Calvin's question becomes pregnant again. Many are called but who are the chosen? An es-sential ingredient of election is clearly a purified body. This is where... assistance to... the work of the... genetic engineering becomes all important. ...If a mouse can become a rabbit so to speak, then it is certainly possible to... create biological strains of humanity that literally would not shit. Although the biological aspects of space colonies are usually discussed in terms of agriculture and husbandry, the ques-tion of human biology (especially the genetic material) is first on the agenda. One of the "commercial uses" of space colonies is the development of new genetic strains:

...the zero-g environment will assist in producing forms of genetic strains faster for use in the fields of agriculture, fermen-tation and animal husbandry. Once such agri-cultural or animal strains have been developed in orbit, they could... be transported to Earth for subsequent propagation.

Genetic engineers are not alone in their ef-forts. For decades now, under the guise of medi-cal experiments, a wide range of scientists have been working on methods of body control. From the Theme... developed under the Eisenhower administration (and revived during the Vietnam War), that studied the body under stress-ful conditions... sensory deprivation with acceleration,... the more recent research in the 70s on the biology of aggressivity and sex-uality in the brain which, presumably, allowed you to bombard the brain with laser beams to produce the appropriate response while avoiding the massive destruction of tissue caused by lo-botomy which made one unfit for work)... the CIA experiments with hallucinogenic drugs, body con-trol, mind-control over the body has been a long   ongoing obsession of capital's planners

Today, devices which were reserved in the past for the happy few are being popularized, consist-ent with the increasing need for a larger pool of the derivative new being. Thus, you can now have home computers who say hello to you when you wake up in the morning, work with your from nine to five, entertain you at night with video games—easy playmates who won't quarrel...won't bother you.

"Good morning, this is Breslin," says the computer giving the daily wake-up call over the intercom. Following this message, it gives the time, forecasts the weather, mentions the day's appointments and turns on the radio for the news. Breslin also starts perking the

morning coffee, monitors the burglar alarm, keeps track of checking accounts, opens the garage door, controls the heating, cooling and lighting systems, addresses Christmas cards and plays an electronic "Happy Birthday" when appropriate. This certainly beats the old TV and even the love play between oneself and the car. Home com-puters are responsive to their owners, you can do things together. It is the ideal tool for an American dream, and does some emotional repro-duction... that the same time of computation-...doubts that easily rival the intellectual requirements of our usual social relations--particularly when these social relations have been already so mechanized and alienated by overwork, stress and all the other amenities of our present coffee. Reproduction, then, becomes extremely simplified and at the same time we gain, presumably a useful if not indispensible train-ing for our passage to the new world.

Along the same lines is the current vogue for... sensory deprivation tanks' that are being sold already to thousands of people and adver-tised as the ultimate tool for home relaxation. Here too the pauperization of our social rela-tions and their transformation into work is a necessary condition for appreciating the joys of hearing nothing, seeing nothing and nobody, forgetting the world and yourself with...

No wonder then that capital's planners and scientists today claim they are on the verge of breaking a new frontier, whose effects on peoples' minds will be of the same magnitude as Marco Polo and Columbus' discovery of the New World. The modern project of the colonization in space and the concomitant new worlds of the mind is the... colonization of the world by European capitalism in the 16th and 17th centuries. Interest in this new frontier will be largely American, we are assured. It will fulfill our need to escape the overpopulated world, Earth, with its sad people of warring tribes, dwindling resources, and insufficient realization that American inter-...must reign supreme. For clearly nothing but ... is manifest...

The Catholic Church preached and followed the armies of the conquistadores... joining the cross and the sword in their... genocide of the civilizations of... America. This time, no infidels waiting to be converted seem to be missing in space (so far), the work of our fundamentalist Christians is much simplified. ...they have to do is to... seen and prepare the democratic angel... will enter the new sacred realm, and... making sure that no disturbing element can climb in the space craft. ...well-established NASA tradition, one can be sure that blood white and male will ...the winning... Most important, no conflicting values will be allowed on board. As Garrett Hardin points out:

A space colony is a precision instrument, far more delicate in its construction and far more vulnerable to sabotage than is our massive earth. How can such a fragile craft withstand the buffeting of warring tribes?...People of great originality and independence of spirit would be intolerable in the spaceship commun-
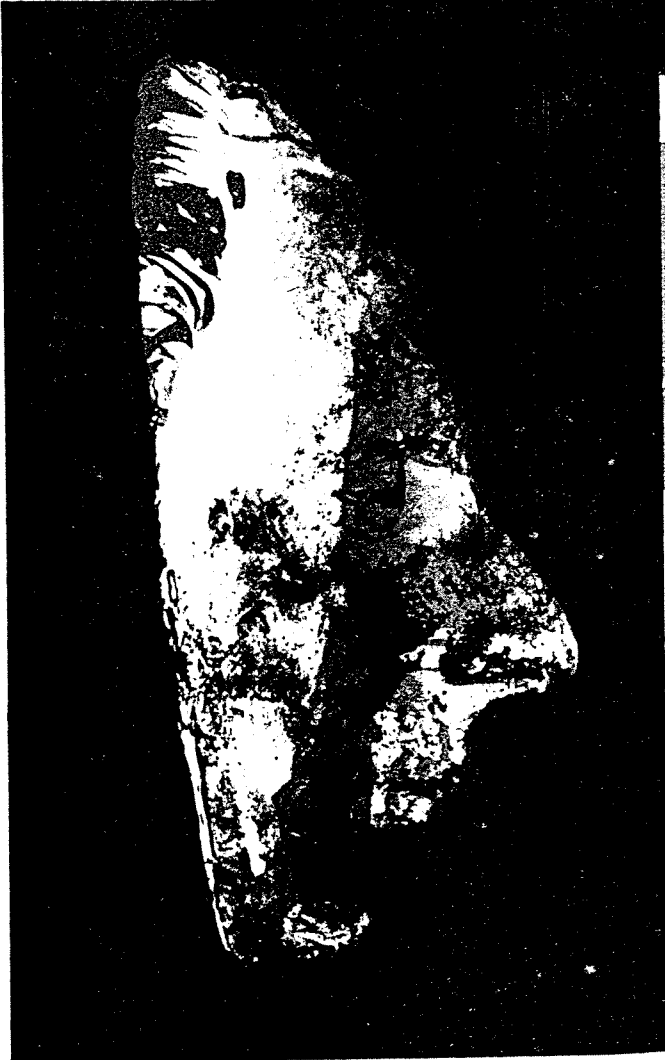
DEATH MASK OF JOSEPH SMITH

Jerry Falwell, Ronald Reagan, and Howard Phillips pose for the cameras

ity, particularly if they belonged to different tribes...to survive it would have to have only one tribe in it.

This means Totalitarianism. In fact, all discussion about the social structure of space work ends with the agreement that the political form of the future space station will be a "rationalistic dictatorship". In the words of Gerald O'Neill, the enthusiastic promoter of the space colony concept:

If you look at the situation of sailing ships when they were out for months or years at a time...it's been found that a dictatorship is what works....It's a survival mechanism essentially because it reduces conflict. There's nothing that produces conflict more than an ill-defined situation of authority.

A society of angels, ruled by God, and motivated by purely spiritual-religious-patriotic concerns. The adventure of space colonization will not be a "New America" in the sense of being the dumping ground of castaways, misfits and slaves. The need for total identification with the work-project, total obedience, total self-discipline and self-control, is so high that, according to NASA, even the old forms of reward should be immediately ruled out:

High monetary incentive should not be used for space colonization recruiting because it attracts the wrong people. Furthermore, it would be unhealthy for the community as well as for the individuals concerned to make efforts to retain 'misfits' in the extra-terrestrial community. It would be healthier to return them to Earth, even though this might seem more expensive.

Work without a wage. It is the essential capitalist utopia where the work and repression becomes its own reward and all the refusers are cast out into the cold stellar night. We have finally reached _their_ limit.
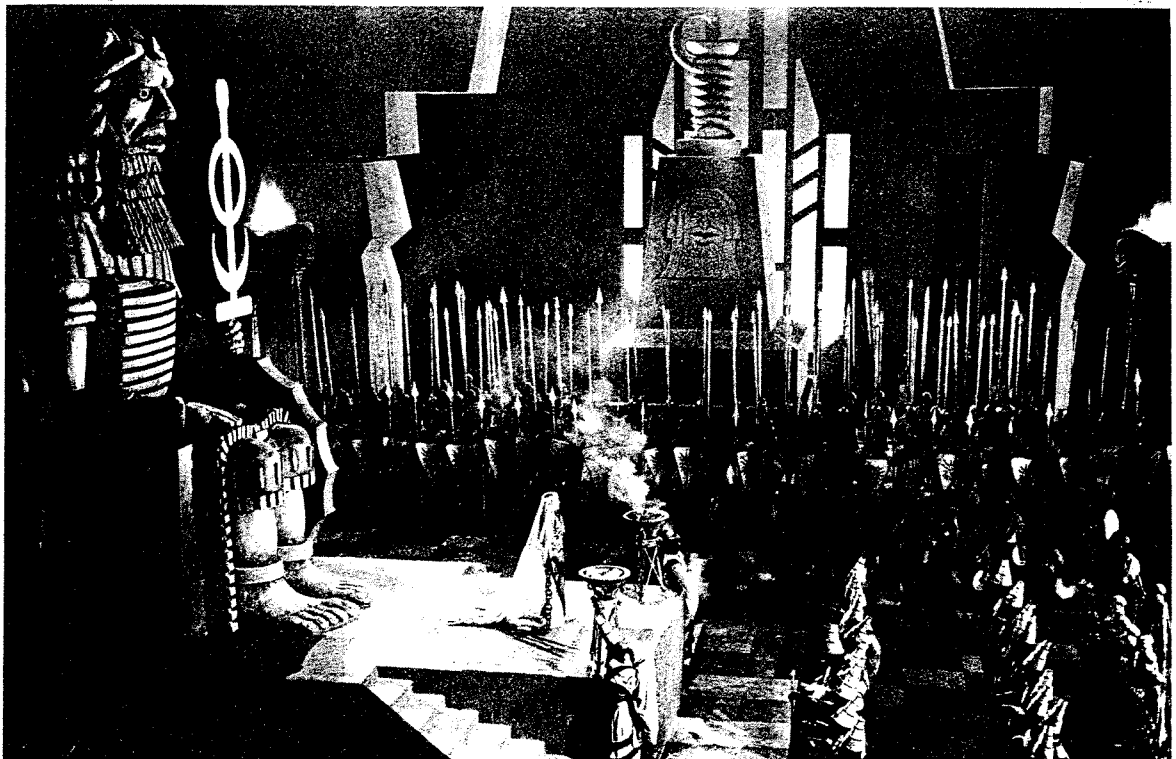
Prologue to the Use of Machines

This is a voyage in the manifold of work, in search for an escape from it. This manifold is now irresistibly expanding. Is it bound to absorb everything having to do with human life? Or is it going to find a limit to its expansion and become a closed, controlled universe in the larger manifold of all human activities?

This article represents also the clash between the authors' minds irreparably crippled by a modern scientific education and their direct experience of antagoinistic social movements, which seem to move beyond any logic shared by scientific theories. Here we refer especially to the 1977 movement in Italy, one of the first modern organized expressions of the

"refusal of work". At that time thousands of people started thinking of how a society can be built outside the rule of work. Many responses were clearly naïve. The movement was repressed. But the reasons behind it are more alive than ever. Many, like us, schizoid products of a prodigious outburst of creativity and of its failure, compelled into the narrow patterns of the society of work, still keep thinking of the 'dream'; aware that it is a dream only as far as the present reality is a nightmare.

We decided that our schizoid attitude, a source of uneasiness for us, has to be taken as a challenge: we must explore the limits of science and discover its relation to a world without work. This is a beginning.

Work: The Thermal Machine

First of all, what is work? We need a precise definition. Here is not the place to examine critically the various definitions of work used today, from the common sense one to the most sophisticated concepts. The new one we introduce has a rigorous basis and far reaching consequences, as we will see. To illustrate our point, let us go back to that important historical period in which human work started being replaced by machines on a new and seemingly unlimited basis: the passage from manufacture to industry allowed by the invention of the thermal machines. The introduction of machines into the working process brought for the first time an objective definition of what is work. After the introduction of machines work was not related anymore to the workers' physical effort, but only to the results produced by it. Physical effort has been irrelevant since them.

Indeed, the worker, as soon as the result of his/her work can be compared with the obtainable by means of a machine, is paid according to the result of his/her work, not according to the amount of physical effort implied in it.

WORK IS WORK AS FAR AS IT CAN BE COMPARED WITH THE WORK OF A MACHINE. Work is measured by the work of machines. This definition or representation of human work by means of machines is the *first abstraction of human work*. It is significant that the historical emergence of this abstraction was contemporary to the emergence of the definition of work in physics: Work=ForceXDisplacement, which is exactly the definition of a thermal machine's work.

Let us consider a few consequences of this definition of work which from now on we also will call *"the formal representation of human work by means of machines."*

1. This definition of work defines consequently the social area of work as the area of those human activities that are comparable with or representable by machines—therefore somehow these activities are the mechanized or mechanizable ones.

2. All other activities were excluded, they were not work. Housework for the most part, play,

thinking, calculating, etc., were excluded from the manifold of work.

3. Thermal machines and machine-tools, on which the first abstraction of human work was based, are characterized by their cyclic activity: the same movements repeated cyclically. This established the main feature of work: repetitiveness.

4. This definition of work gave a sanction in the work process itself to the law according to which the amount of produced value is proportional to the average time socially necessary to produce it. The relevant point is that now—i.e., after the formal representation became operative— this law does not appear as a result of a complicated social interaction (the average time), but becomes embodied in the machines themselves: the produced value is proportional to the time a machine takes to produce it.

As we said before, the formal representation of working activity (by means of machines) excluded for a long time many activities which are now considered work. In particular it excluded any computing activity, data analyzing and processing and so on.

The fact that such activities are not considered work is due to a generalization of the formal representation, which has to be considered effective starting from the Great Depression or World War II.

To understand this new step in the abstraction of human work, let us observe that, once working activity is defined as that measurable by the machines' activity, it is implied that it will undergo the same generalizations as the activity of machines will. Nowadays machines are able to replace not only the part of human activity that consists of mechanically repeated movements, but also the part called computation and data processing. It is a superior activity, not reducible to mere repetitiveness. As this is the main topic of this article, we will treat it in detail.

Work: The Logical Machine

We can give a description of the logical machine as simple as it is fruitful. The idea is Turing's and it was presented in this form by Davis in 1958. The machine is made of:

1) a tape divided into squares of the same size, which can run from left to right;
2) a device which can perform four elementary operations on this tape, one for each unit time:

   a) it can write '1' on a square if it is blank, i.e., if it is =0.
   b) it can erase '1' from a square, i.e., write '0',
   c) it can shift the tape by one place to the right,
   d) it can shift the·tape by one place to the left.

Each operation is controlled by an instruction. Therefore a logical (Turing) machine can be identified with the set of instructions which define it.

To make it work we only need to insert a tape with as many 1's as the input integer or integers and then read how many 1's there are when the machine stops. This is the output.

As one sees, it is not a very complicated mechanism, but we can show that this very simple machine can do whatever an electronic computer can,

atleast the set of instructions that define them), one after another. That is, for any given integer it gives us as an output a set of instructions constituting a Turing machine/ And the machines obtained in this way exhaust all possible Turing machines in a list which, unfortunately, is infinite.

Anyhow, we have a representation of all possible Turing machines that today's science and technology can supply.

So much for mathematics.

INTERLUDE #1

With the logical machine we reach a new level in the generalization of the concept of work. Therefore we can give the following definition of computational work or, simply, work. We call 'computational work' the work that can be done either by a system which includes a thermal machine plus a machine tool, or by one or more such systems controlled by a logical machine, or by a logical machine itself.

Now remember that we are interested in two different kinds of questions. The first is about how far machines can replace human work; in other words, about the machines' limits. The second is: why is not computational human work completely replaced by machines?

and vice versa. Therefore this supplies us with a good description of what numerically controlled systems and electronic computers are.

This is not all. We can build a Turing machine that generates all possible Turing machines (or
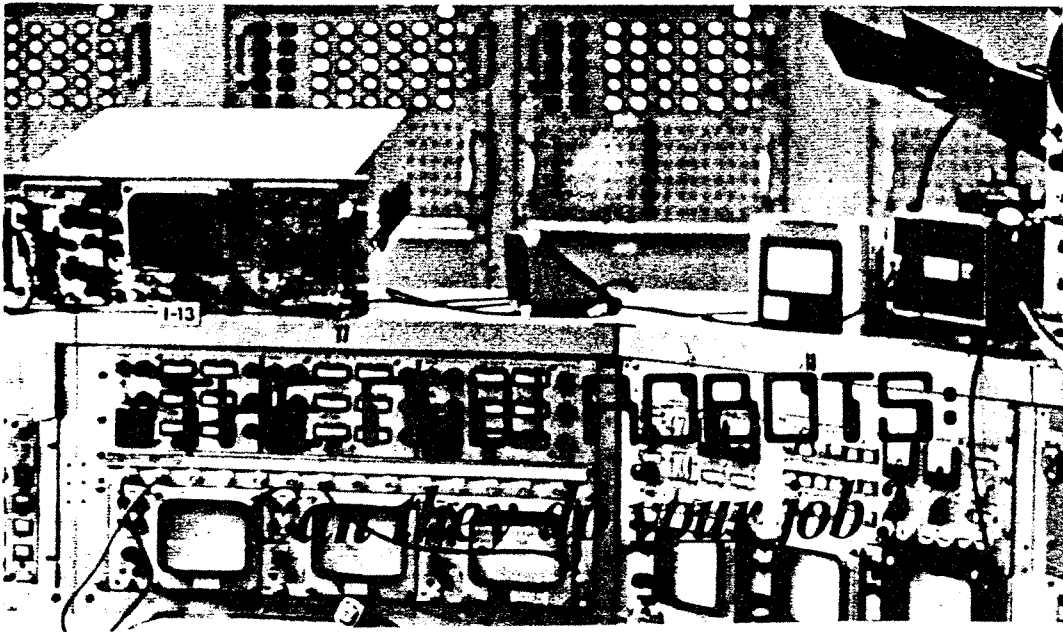
Machines' Limits

Let us call a 'function" any sequence of oper-ations, either abstract or concrete. The relevant problem here is to decide whether a given function can be worked out by a machine or not. In other words, whether such a function is computable or not.

We can find immediately an example of a non-computable function: the problem of deciding whether any function is computable or not is not computable. In other words, there exists no machine capable of deciding whether there exists a machine which can replace any given human activity in general! (For a proof of this result see the footnotes.)

This is an example of the limits inherent to the present machines. About the limits of machines much has been written since Godel's Theorem, both in connection with logic and with effective computability.

Very roughly speaking, the common background of these discussions is that any mechanical system (including the Turing machine in its mathematical form or the logical rules of deduction of any axiomatic system) cannot control completely any language powerful enough as to "speak about itself", any language in which you can construct "strange loops". Indeed the structure of indecida-bility proofs goes back, even if in a very sophisti-cated way, to an old logical problem, the so-called semantic or 'Liar' paradox. For example,

if I say, "I am lying" am I saying the truth or a falsehood? Deciding which is not easy. Indeed, if I lie then I tell the truth, and therefore I do not lie. If I tell the truth then I do not lie, and so I do lie. This looks like a word game and it appears to be unimportant for everyday life...but it is extremely important for logical machines (as well as all forms of struggles).

The point is that using a language capable of 'speaking about itself' means being able to reflect upon one's own state which is the pre-requisite to modifying it. Therefore, what is called innovation, for example, seems to be so far a characteristic pertaining not to machines but exclusively to humans.

This has not to be construed as a self-celebrating assertion. It means that we are not reducible to machines qua workers, but it also means that work is not exhausted by compu-tational work. Not only that. We had better add that in the division of work, hierarchy represents also a classification of work accord-ing to its non-computational computational con-tent: the more one goes down in the heirarchical scale, the closer s/he gets to pure computational work, while decision, innovation and certain forms of reproduction has rather to be looked for in the upper levels of Hierarchy. The organization of work is characterized by the division between computation and non-computation-al content.

Economic Limits

In 'our' economic system, the rule determining the process of substitution of computational work by machines is simple and rigorous: a worker is replaced by a machine when the cost per unit product for the work is greater than for the ma-chine. The variables coming into play as far as the cost per unit product is concerned are:

1) cost of the machine (engineering and manufacturing cost);
2) energy cost for operating the machine;
3) cost of labor.

It is easy to see that the present trend consists in increasing (1) and (2) and decreasing (3). To this, the high cost of money should be added. The

present economic trend does not suggest that
capital is going to utilize the substitution
process unless it is forced to do so.
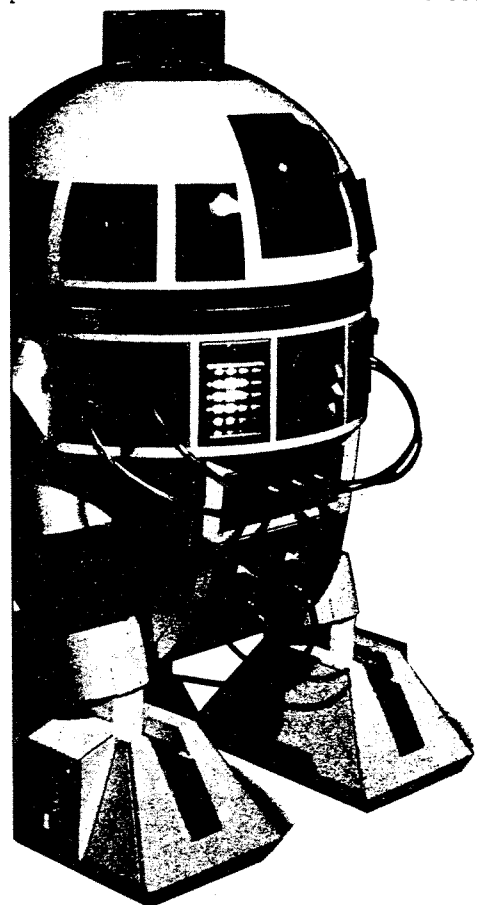
INTERLUDE #2

Now we have a clear framework of the relation
between human work and machines. Before we proceed
in our analysis, which is far more ambitious, let
us consider a few consequences of what we have
been saying. The connections here are far less
rigorous than the exact theorems quoted before.
Nonetheless, we think they are suggestive. The
term "formal representation of human work by
means of machines" does not mean simply the ab-
straction ensuing from the fact that human
work is measured by comparing it to machines.
It also has another important implication:
society is not formalized on the basis of the
overall activity of each individual, but
according to the formal representation of
his/her activity, or, in other words, to the
computational work part of his/her activity.
For the latter determines salary, working
hours, social status, it formally separates
classes, it cuts off dropouts. In other
words, it determines the 'official' or formal
society. It does not matter what one does
outside his/her working place, outside his/
her working time. What matters is his/her being
at the right time in the work place to perform
the operation required from him/her. And the
more this operation is performed in a machine
style, the better. This is what he/she is paid
for.
From these examples we see that the formal
society is, roughly speaking, the area where

money circulates. No wonder. Indeed, the
characteristic of all machines (not only the
termal ones), viz., the rigorous Law of Value=
the Value of the Product is proportional to
the working time of the machine, extends now
to all activities encompassed by the formal
representation. Maybe it is worth reminding
that this law is the basis of money. So--we
say it again--the only activity one is paid for
is that measurable by machine's work: what
one is paid for is the result of one's
working activity in the standard form deter-
mined by the work of machines, that is the
result of the repetitive and/or computation-
al activity. What is not comparable in any way·
with this kind of activity, is incommensurable
with respect to machines' activity, is not
measurable in terms of money (reproduction in
part, innovation, play, etc.)
One might object at this point that, after
all, also decision making officials, managers,
scientists, etc., have a salary not completely
unlike any other salary; that there are 'welfare'
and 'unemployment' salaries; that also for some
aspects of reproductive work a wage is provided.
But these activities are treated according to the
formal representation of work anyway, to get some
evaluation however incomplete, e.g., the conditions
the state applies to AFDC income to measure 'mother-
work'. This pervaisive feeling of incompleteness
corresponds to the common sense realization that
the formal representation is an incomplete grid
in order to assess the activity of a person. Being
compared to some machine allows somethimes a
very rough assessment, though at times it appears
as a distorting mirror for reality. Nonetheless
it forms the basis of the formal society.
All these seem to be quite conspicuous excep-
tions to the previous scheme. But they are not.
We reverse the argument. The fact that jobs like
decision-making, inventing, 'doing nothing', re-
producing, etc., are treated according to the
formal representation of work, is a striking
example of its ubiquitous pervasiveness.
The point is that in our society there is no
other rule than the formal representation (or
Law of Value, if we prefer), and money represents,
warrants and enforces it simultaneously. Despite
its apparent incompleteness, the formal society
(that is, the social embodiment of the formal
representation) pretends to exhaust the whole
society, its variety, in particular wealth,
through money. So, as for the above mentioned
exceptions, the formal society has no choice but
to treat them according to the general rule lest
the entire construction crumble, but also because
there is no other available criterion.
We may wonder how this pretence can work. To
understand this point, we resort to a figure of
speech taken from applied mathematics: approxima-
tion. Approximation is an operative device used
when a rigorous approach is either too hard or
impossible. It is interesting to notice that
nobody has ever deemed it worthwhile to study
the nature of approximation. Approximation is
almost miraculous, it reaches everywhere. With
the help of computers we can approximate, or
simulate, any function from the simplest estimates
in scientific research to the very complex evolu-
tion of economic parameters.

Now let us take approximation, or simulation, as a category and apply it to our scheme: the formal society (the machine-based society) manages to approximate, or simulate, the real society up to the point of being confused with it. The fact that the formal representation of work can approximate the real society creates the illusion that it is complete, that it is the essence of society, that it is the just and true representation of society; and, even deeper, it creates the idea that a representation of society is possible and necessary.

Looking at the scenario just drawn, we could also argue in the opposite way with a strange result. There exists a skeleton-society formed by all existing machines, which we call the system of machines: and we could say, correctly, that it simulates the real society only as far as society agrees to stick to the formal representaiton of the working activity, or as far as society agrees to stick to machines' behavior, or in short, agrees to simulate it. Our work, inasmuch as it is repetitive or computational activity, is a simulation of machines' work. It is a simulation in the sense that it is unnecessary, it is already out of date, and thus we simulate a society where this work is necessary. The circus of history, if any, is here.

So far we have given little consideration to that crazy variable: the human being. As a matter of fact, the whole staory could be regarded as an attempt to define the human by means of machines, or to find a "rationality" in humans. But human activity is far more complex than simply mimicking machines, even when they are computers. As we have anticipated, the formal representation excludes many activities which are essential for human life such as play, love, fancy; and for the reproduction of the machines' system, such as the reproduction of the labor force.

This results in a myriad of small deviations from the norms of formal society: a social fermentation fluctuating around the point of minimal desires represented by the official society. These phenomena have hardly been studied, the most usual attitude being to call them abnormal or irrational. This is not the place to analyze the enormous complexity of these phenomena. We want to point out that maybe the most important of them concerns the attitude toward work. It is more than a simple fluctuation, it is by now a hardly ignorable concretion which has reached the status of a social law: the refusal of work.

The system of machines is incomplete both in the sense that the machinery is kept anachronistically underdeveloped and in the sense that the formal representation of society by means of today's machines is far from being a complete representation of human activity. The refusal of work pushes toward the completion of the machines' system and, necessarily, the elimination of the formal representation.

All the social noise produced by the refusal of work and similar and related fluctuations affects the orderly deployment of the formal representation. In particular, the Law of Value, which is a rigorous law when applied immediately to the working process, has to come to compromises and is apparently only an average law when applied to the entire society. The fact that it holds as a rigorous law in the working process and as an average law in general, is a direct consequence of the incompleteness of the machines' system. This in turn dictates the necessity of a ruling apparatus (state, corporations, police, ad nauseam) whose function is to enforce the validity of the law. Here we find a strong, facinating suggestion that the ruling apparatus is an image of the imcompleteness of the machines' system.

The Wealth of Nations

After this long parenthesis, let us go back to our main subject. We saw that the present economic trend is not to utilize spontaneously the process of substitution of human work by machines. In order to see the possibilities of the substitution process beyond the 'objective' compatibilities imposed by profit, we have to proceed further with our analysis of the machines' system.

We have seen that no machine exists that can govern the innovation process, and that the non-computational human activity has the function of governing the language of innovation; that is, a language powerful enough to think of itself and which the machines cannot control.

We can say that, as far as goods production is concerned, the main activity, as the computational work is replaced by machines, is to build an information channel—the language—governing and codifying computational work. Indeed, we saw that logical machines, even though very powerful, are reducible to a few fundamental operations. The substitution process is therefore the effort to reduce work (when it is computational work, of course) to combination as complicated as one

likes of those elementary operations—i.e., the four basic operations of the Turing machine.

Let us analyze this point in greater detail. To this end we resort to information theory. In such a theory, the typical scheme is the following:

An example is the telegraph: the source is the message we want to transmit, the codification consists in translating it into dots and dashes and then into electronic pulses, the channel is a wire, the decodification transforms the electronic pulses into dots and dashes and finally into alphabetic letters for the reciever.

If we consider a source emitting signals chosen from a finite alphabet, a_1, a_2,...,a_k, with the probability that each letter will be emitted, $p(a_1)$, $p(a_2)$,...,$p(a_k)$, we can define the amount of information contained in a letter, a_i, of the alphabet by $-\log_2 p(a_i)$.

The meaning of this definition is the following: $-\log_2 p(a_i)$ is a function that increases as $p(a_i)$ decreases, so that a very frequently used letter (with a large probability) contains little information, while the occurence of letter with a small probability (and so infrequently used) implies more

information. Thus in any English message the letters 'e', 'a', or 't' which occur frequently would have a small informational quantity while the letters 'z', 'q' or 'x' would have a large information content.

The measure that is used to give the average amount of information that a source emits is called its <u>entropy</u> and is defined as:

$$-\sum p(a_i)\log_2 p(a_i).$$

There is an important connection between entropy and the homogeneity of a system. Let us consider the simplest example. Suppose the source is some-one who tosses a coin and wants to let another know the result. How much information does he need? That depends on the coin. If the coin is perfectly balanced (probability of heads=probability of tails=½), the amount of information, or entropy, is maximal, while if the coin is 'weighted' (for example, the probability of heads=.9 and the probability of heads=.1) then the source nees less information to communicate the result.

The basic idea is that the more the system is <u>inhomogenous</u> the more it is <u>predictable</u> (and so has <u>less entropy</u>) and therefore it needs <u>less information</u> to be codified or decodified into a language.

We need another important concept from information theory: channel capacity. <u>Channel capacity is the amount of information that can be transmitted per unit time</u>. One of the fundamental theorems in infromation tells us that, for us to be able to decodify a message, the rate of transmission (amount of information transmitted per unit time), <u>must not be greater than the ratio of the channel capacity to the entropy of the source</u>.

Let us consider this condition. If the entropy of the source is large and the channel capacity is small then the rate of transmission possible is going to be very small. If, on the other hand, the channel capacity is large and the entropy of the source is small the possible rate of transmission can be quite large.

Now let us notice that the substitution process is a process of codification/decodification by the non-computational work. We have seen that the substitution process means the decomposition (codification) of work into simple operations (the four operations of the Turing machine) and the recombination (codification) of these operations into complex machines. <u>The channel that allows this transformation is a complex social mechanism. At its core is non-computational work</u>.

It seems inevitable that the channel capacity increases as a consequence of human work being replaced by machines. Indeed, the more the substitution process goes on, the more 'complex' are the areas of human activities that are candidates for being replaced by machines. That has two consequences. The first is that the 'number of messages per unit time' to be sent through the channel increases, so that the channel capacity must increase proportionally. The second is that these more complex areas are <u>more homogenous, or less inhomogenous</u>. Inhomogeneity is here synonymous with structure: an activity is more inhomogeneous the more it is organized in the <u>sense of the the machines' system</u>, or the more it has mechanical structure. In reverse the point can be made
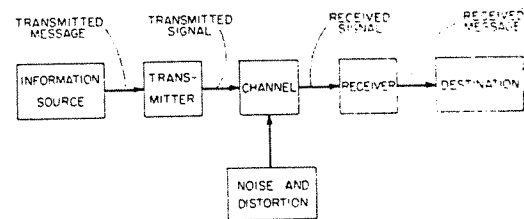
Figure 1.1 A generalized communication system.

in this way: an activity is homogeneous if it lacks a rigid mechanical structure, is fluid and complex. Putting it in terms of an equation: Complexity=Lack of Structure=Homogeneity= unpredictability. As a consequence of the increasing homogeneity of the more complex activities being mechanized the entropy of the source increases. This is a second factor that requires a higher channel capacity.

We have shown that the operation of the substitution process requires the widening of the social channel capacity. There is macroscopic evidence of this. Let us define 'primary information sector' as the part of the economy that concerns computers, telephones, media, telecommunications, and 'secondary information sector' as instruction and management. Then in the U.S., the wage bill for the workers of the information sector is larger than the corresponding bills for agriculture, industry and services together. Almost half of the GNP concerns the production and distribution of information goods and services.

If we agree that the channel capacity must be proportional to the information sector, we have rough but clear evidence that the continous introduction of machinery in the past years has been accompanied by an increasing channel capacity of the system.

Now let us try a few extrapolations based on the scheme we have just presented. Our ultimate aim is to state that channel capacity is a more abstract form of wealth than money, which is the present officially recognized and undisputed representative of wealth.

First of all we must clarify that there exists no parallelism between money and channel capacity. They pertain to two different conceptual stages. Money should rather be compared with information. Is there any equivalence between information and money?

We can reduce information to money in the sense that information can be bought and sold. But this is an improper equivalence. Indeed, transferring money to someone else implies losing its value, but this is not true anymore for information. We can say that <u>the circulation of money does not increase wealth, whereas the circulation of information does</u>.

There exists the possibility for information to represent money. Most money exchanges among banks are via computers without moving real currency. Therefore an informational channel can represent a channel for the circulation of money. But it is much more difficult for a money flow to represent an information channel.

One way in which money represents information is given by the oscillations in the exchange rates

of the various national currencies with respect to one another, which has become lately the so-called 'monetary chaos'. From this the economic operator can decodify information and make decisions. However, this is an information channel only in a very particular way, because only the big owners of money (in the form of fixed or financial capital) can have access to it. Money does not undergo any transubstantiation, it does not lose its very material characteristic of being owned, of representing 'property', of being a tool for controlling labor.

To maintain these characteristics of money today, the ruling apparatus is ready to diminish the circulation of money (mostly by means of high interests rates) to stifle the rates of growth of the world's economies and to impose forcibly the monetary order up to the use of war.

Why is this so? We think we have already answered this question when we remarked that the ruling apparatus is a mirror image of the incompleteness of the machines' system. Society pushes toward its completion, rendering the ruling apparatus a more and more obsolete structure. We do not mean to underestimate the complexity of the power system of our society, but it is clear that its consolidated material interests are reason enough to explain its reluctance to get out of history. Its present reaction is a typical attempt to go back in the history of social evolution. The crucial move is to narrow the channel capacity of the social system to the point that the only information channel is the circulation of money. Capital displays a good deal of clear-sightedness in this move, which corresponds to the (correct!) perception that a widening information channel is the worst enemy for the ruling apparatus.

But we have seen that the channel capacity is already enormously developed, so this move is only an expedient to perpetuate the system of power, eventually bound to be defeated. But this does not mean that it lacks effectiveness in sabotaging the social wealth. On the contrary, the damage the ruling apparatus is doing is incalculable.

From the opposite point of view, labor has a reason to exist only as long as, on the one hand, its computational work cannot be replaced by machines, and, on the other hand, there does not exist a channel powerful enough to render effective the transformation of non-computational work into wealth. For channel capacity represents wealth and the circulation of wealth in its most abstract form.

Since channel capacity is not reducible to a commodity, the process of wealth reappropriation must assume new forms. It cannot be conceived of any more as the possession of the means of production. Channel capacity can be used not owned. Owning it means stopping the circulation of information, thereby destroying wealth. The ruling apparatus is strangling the channel capacity with its present policy. Winning means freeing the channel. Widening the channel capacity is a complicated social task and we do not mean to dispose of it in a simplistic way. But it is clear with the naked eye that socializing the channel, namely increasing the number and variety of users, implies by itself increasing the channel capacity. Therefore, freeing the channel means not only getting rid of all the obstacles that obstruct the social access to it, but also inventing socializable techniques of atomized condification/decodification (direct and in real time) of the social system.

Footnotes

Work: The Thermal Machine

the thermal machines: In a strict sense, by a thermal machine we mean any device transforming heat into work. The steam engine was the first industrialized way of transforming naturally stored energy into work. However here we are not interested in the process of transforming energy into work, but in the fact that a thermal machine is characterized by a cyclic activity. For historical reasons we call "thermal machine" any device with the same characteristics, for example an electric engine, a machine-tool to which a thermal or electrical machine is applied, etc. So thermal machine is a term to express a general idea in the same sense as, later on, we will call 'Turing machine' any computing device. We emphasize again that in this article the particular way of transforming energy into work is irrelevant.

the law...the average time socially necessary to produce it: There is indeed a contradiction between the "machine measure of work" and the "value measure of work".

The first measure is the ultimate 'shop floor' measure that can be used to evaluate present worker performance. It is the precisely defined ideal that can be used by all sorts of bosses to discipline workers with the inevitable threat (an extremely ambiguous one at that) of replacing the worker with a machine. What is called Taylorism is exactly this specification of the machine ideal turned into a "science". The worker is to be mechanized as much as possible (both in a thermal and logical sense) under the threat of being replaced by the machine he is to mimic: John Henry squeezed between the steam hammer and the foreman until his heart bursts.

But the machine measure of work is by no means identical to the value measure of work. One of the main differences is temporal. The machine measure can be applied to past and present work, but a value evaluation of present work is necessarily post factum (indeed, many times taking years).The value measure of work requires that the present product

(the crystalization of abstract labor) go through a whole social cycle involving innumerable factors extraneous to the immediate conditions of production. Thus quite literally the capitalist "Does not know what he hath done"! Similarly the worker does not really know what quantity of his activity has been turned into work at the moment of exhuding it. This is ultimately a consequence of the social nature of capital which can have cruel consequences on both the working class as a whole (sometimes 'struggle' can produce values) and individual capitalists (after so much "effort" they go bankrupt and it was all "for nothing".)

But though capital can exist post factum, capitalists cannot. They must have a measure that is immediately applicable, "objective" and "effective". Thus the eternal attraction of the machine: a worker sans the refusal of work. But there's the rub: the lack of refusal of work is barbed with the machine's inability to produce value. Thus the ideal system of machines can only be partially realized, necessarily, for

if the ideal were realized totally capital would disappear, no value nor surplus value would be produced.

Inversely, the working class is beguiled by the same ambiguity of the machine. On the one side, the machine is the measurer and counter of the drudgery of work (either potentially or actually) and in effect the intensifier and lengthener of the working day; but on the other side, it has within it the Utopia of Zerowork. Hence with and along side the Luddites we have Bill Sykes' observation: "Gentlemen of the jury, no doubt the throat of this commercial traveller has been cut. But that is not my fault, it is the fault of the knife, Must we, for such a temporary inconvience, abolish the use of the knife? Is it not as salutary in surgery, as it is knowing in anatomy? And in addition a willing help at the festive board? If you abolish the knife—you hurl us back into the depths of barbarism." The tension within working class movements toward machines (thermal and/or logical) has its roots in the very logic of the struggle against capital, in the end it cannot be resolved until capital itself is destroyed, and an evaluation of pre-capitalistic and hence pre-mechanistic knowledge can begin.

Work: The Logical Machine

Machines' Limits

there exists no machine...which can replace a given human activity: A function relates any given number with a number. For example, the square function associates 2 with 4, 3 with 9, 4 with 16, 5 with 25, 6 with 36 and so on. A Turing machine computes functions by simply applying a 'clerical proceedure' on an input number and systematically processing it until an output result is computed. It computes a function if for any given input number it computes an output number that is identical to the number the function associates with the input number. The 'clerical proceedure' a Turing machine uses is literally the program of the machine and it is built out of the four elementary operations listed.

Now we can ask the question: can any function be computed by some Turing machine? In other words, are all possible functions computable?

In order to answer this question think of the set of all Turing machines. Though there are an infinite number of them, they can be put in a fixed, linear order because the programs (i.e., the rules that ∷fix the clerical proceedures they go through) define these machines, and these program can be put in a lexicographic order the way a librarian orders books by their titles. So we can literally <u>list</u> all possible Turing machines: Z_1, Z_2, Z_3,...,Z_{132},...; this list is clearly infinite and for each whole number there is a distinct Turing machine. For example, Z_{254} is the Turing machine that is in the 254th place in the list.

	1	2	3	4	5	6............r.........
z_1	5	3	7	12	13	5............3.........
z_2	12	21	3	0	5	6............4.........
z_3	10	10	3	12	0	0............12........
z_4	5	6	7	8	10	11............3........
z_5	5	5	5	5	5	5............5.........
z_r	1	2	0	4	3	7............ ....

Now we are in a position to draw up a table where on the left side going top down is the list of all Turing machines in order while across the top of the table is simply the list of whole numbers from 1 to infinity. The entries in the table are the output numbers that the Zuring machine of that row computes when the whole number on top of the column is the input number. Thus in the table in front of us which we are using for illustration the entry on the second row second column is 21 because the second Turing machine on the master list computes as an output number 21 when the input number is 2. Now alittle care is necessary! Let us define the following function on the basis of this table, for any number n the function T will give the following result:

$T(n)=n$ if and only if the nth Turing machine when given as its input number n <u>does not</u> have as its output result the number n;

otherwise let $T(n)=0$.

Just to get the feel for this function we see that it has only to do with the <u>diagonal</u> of the table (and that's why it is sometimes called a 'diagonal proof') and that its first five values are $T(1)=1$, $T(2)=2$, $T(3)=0$, $T(4)=4$, $T(5)=0$ and so on. This is a perfectly correct function, it associates numbers with numbers in a perfectly determinate way. But is it computable? If it is then there is a Turing machine that generates it. If that is the case, this Turing machine must be found in the list of <u>all</u> Turing machines, so let us call it Z_r. If Z_r exists it can be found on the left hand side of the table and the results of its computations can be found there also. But now let us consider the r-th entry on the r-th row of the table. What is it to be? By our definition of the function T, the function that Z_r is to compute, we have the following two choices: either $T(r)=r$ or $T(r)=0$. If, however, $T(r)=r$ then the entry found in the r-th place of the r-th row of the table

cannot be r <u>by definition</u> (now is the time to look back at the definition of T!) but this leads to a contradiction! For if Z_r computes T then the r-th place of the r-th must be r. So let us consider the other alternative: $T(r)=0$, but if that is the case then the r-th place in the r-th row will have r in it! But that would make it impossible for Z_r to compute T!

So we can conclude that there is no Turing machine that computes T, and so we have a function that is not computable.

Now the reader might think that the above proof is just a trick. But infact this proof is exactly analogous to a famous mathematical proof of the late-19th century (the original 'diagonal proof') that demonstrated that the infinity of points on a line or in space is or an order higher (indeed infinitely higher) than the whole numbers (1,2,3,...). I.e., the continuum is a radically different thing than the discrete arithmatic of whole numbers can capture (a rigorous expression of Bergson's intuition). But the remarkable thing is the ability to approximate the infinite richness of the continuum with the relative and infinite paucity of the whole numbers. For those who will see a significance here in terms of the relation of capital to the wealth produced by living activity, we wish them well and hope the effort has been worth it!

Godel's Theorem: This theorem was proven 'at the beginning of the Great Depression of the 30s and it, along with Heisenberg's "Uncertainty Principle", forms one of the crucial limits of capitalist science. It can be stated quite simply: there is no formal system that can prove every truth of arithmatic. The reasons for this result are much more subtle, but roughly one could say that any system that could even begin to attempt to prove every arithmetic truth would be powerful enough to "reflect" its own mechanism of proof within itself and so would generate paradoxes like the Liar, i.e., it would create the space for a "strange loop".

Interlude #2

it creates the idea that...is possible and necessary: In a similar vein see Marx on fetishism, especially <u>Capital</u>, vol. I, chap. 1, sec. 4.

only and average law...entire society: The average we refer to is not the same as the sort of arithmetic average that can be inferred from the marxian statement of the law of value: an average referring to different conditions of production in different factories and industrial branches. This kind of average of course exists, but we ask the reader to abstract from it. What we want to stress here is the inevitable compromise which is a consequence of the formal representation trying to exhaust the whole society. So the average refers to the formal representation trying to cover all the non-computational activity which is being developed in our society and which is in fact not representable by machines' work. In a sense we are dealing here with a political average, even though this is too poor a word to express the complexity of what is understood.

The Wealth of Nations

The source's entropy...the average source's information: Take two sources, the first transmitting alphabetical letters in a completely random way and the second using the same symbols to transmit English senteces. In the second case the letter 'e' is more frequent than any other letter. So the information contained in a transmitted letter 'e' is less than the amount of information transmitted through another letter, say 'q'. Further, the entropy is higher for the first source than for the second. In fact one can show that the entropy is maximum when the frequency of the different symbols is the same. This explains once again the fact that high homogeneity is related to high entropy, while the existence of structure (the presence of some kind of coherence) implies low entropy.

The basic idea...decodified into a language: Any behavior that is full of surprises is highly entropic. "Intelligent" and "emotional" behavior have this in common and so they are, in this terminology, "homogeneous" because they are very unpredictable and continually escaping any attempt to formalize and structure them.

the circulation of money...information does: Circulation of money conserves ownership in the transfer process, whereas circualtion of information multiplies it. It goes without saying that in so doing it negates ownership.

STRANGE LOOPS
Reagan in Zurich

Strange Loops was written by friends in Europe during the summer of 1981. It represents a different perspective on the U.S. at this time-- an optimistic picture in a number of ways.

"Let's put America back to work!" With this 'promising' slogan Meese, Baker and Reagan won the presidential election. What do they mean by "back"? They mean a return to that 'golden' period before 1963, before the crisis of work and profits, when America still worked; that is, when U.S. capital could still register a profit growth each year. With Reagan and the 80s, then, we seem to fall back to the 50s, the time before the 'original sin'. Is Reagan the beginning of a new epoch for American capital? A brief look at his program tells us, "No way!" As spectacular as his election and early congressional victories may have seemed, these were merely superficial events.

The 'roll-back' of Keynesian policies had already started with Ford and Carter: welfare payments did not keep up with inflation; the energy price spiral effectively reduced real wages; defense expenditures had begun to rise; public services in the cities were destroyed. In short, the mechanism of surplus value transfer described in The Work/Energy Crisis and the Apocalypse (Midnight Notes, vol. 2, n. 1) had been clearly revealed in the Ford-Carter period. However, the Carter set-up was not credible, neither was his performance as a leading man: he was too cool, too business-like, too colorless. With Reagan capital has finally found the right man for its initiative--a 'real man' of the 50s and a professional, though second-rate, actor. He is the appropriate form for the content of this period.

The political show has now finally become tuned to capitalist 'every day life'. And, in these apocalyptic times, the show is not peripheral. The 'real' politicians and their mediating class organizations are disintegrating, their political space is being dismantled by reality, the Tip O'Neils are finally having their heart attacks. In place of the old political show there is an attempt to directly manage a 'lifestyle'. In this respect Reagan is important. He embodies a way of living, the 50s day time TV shows, a psychic principle. While Reagan needs the White House to stage his "Father Knows Best" show, Carter, the administrator, could have operated from any corporate suite.

What is the new 'culture' that Reagan embodies? It is the culture of a strange-time-loop, the deduction of the 60s and the shameless return to the 50s. Loathing the failed self-liberation which left one in a vacuum, refusing self-responsibility, into masochistic pleasure of self-discipline, joy in self-destruction, desire of death: these elements, openly or covertly, are part of it. Reagan, who is something of a national Marquis do Sade wished for by his subjects/victims, presents himself as a return to wholesomeness, to simple things and 'hard work'. The image is used in a morbid way by the adepts of the 'strange loop'.

The fashions of the 50s return as painful irony, as new wave, as punks; crew-cuts, narrow ties, high heels, pointed shoes; plastic, convulsion, faded looks. The 'new elegance' is unhealthy, ricketic, buttoned-up, harsh, coded, spastic, near death. Is this a joke on Reagan's new look in the White House or is this its necessary complement? In any case it is the refusal of 'laid back', of the hippy Geist; it is a refusal of health and efficient reproduction; refusal of functional discipline through an absurd self-discipline. We are Devo. This strange loop brings back to America the work ethos, praise of discipline, and the rhetoric of the 50s; but it does not bring America back to work and productivity.

Reagan is the rhetoric of hard work in the White House, but does he work hard? Work ethics, yes; work, no. Reagan, as a proletarian who got rich, symbolizes to all his luckless comrades, "Work no more." Reagan is a lazy rotten president. He gets up late, delegates all toilsome work, likes all social occasions, likes to chat

with all the famous guests from over the world.
He's amusing himself in the White House. Cham-
pagne flows. The smoking jacket is always in
honor as well as the festive bands in military
uniform. He presents a cheap movie dream from
the 50s. Reagan embodies anything but hard work.
Never has the work ethic and discipline been so
well ironized. But what is Reagan doing to pacify
capital which is suspiciously observing this
show?

Reagan speaks to U.S. capital's soul point
for point. Like the old country doctor he
diagnoses 'tax anxiety syndrome' and prescribes
tax cut and consessions. A simple political task.
But to engineer a "New Beginning" requires more
finesse, even more instinct for cheap effects.
Thus the new flavor of 'freedom and adventure'
of capital is personified by ex-General Haig.
While the true adventure of capital lies in the
sum of the small acts of refusal and daily break-
down, of decomposition and wear-and-tear, these
adventures are invisible, almost inconceivable,
and are inappropriate for dramatization; not the
material for dreams and nightmares. Again the 50s
help. They present the clear, understandable,
age-old hereditary enemy: the Soviet Union and
world Communist Terrorism. Haig takes them out
of the closet. This enemy has a face: bull-like
Brezhnev, fat bureaucrats, brutal Soviet generals,
tanks in Afganistan.

Reagan's rendezvous with the 50s becomes con-
crete. He co-stars with people he can understand,
who experienced the same time: Depression, Hot
and Cold War; youthful friends as it were. Brezhnev
is a risen proletarian like Reagan. They have the
same expensive tastes and would have fun together
if they met socially.

Enter Haig with his deranged look, his "I'm in
control here." He seems capable of risking the
Third World War for pure ambition. By contrast,
Reagan appears strong, calm, capable of holding
back such a madman. Their problem is that at the
moment the Soviet Union does not even appear
that aggressive. The Afgan war was only a clearing
of the backyard. And then, beside Haig and a few
Cold Warriors, nobody believes in a World Commu-
nist Revolution any more, least of all Brezhnev.

Here too Haig is helpful. He warns that the
USSR is behind world terrorism. All those move-
ments are directly controlled by Moscow he ac-
cuses. From the ETA to the Red Brigades and all
the different liberation struggles from South
Africa to El Salvador. Poor Russians! Just as
well could the Russians have maintained the
opposite: where did Quaddafi get his weapons?
The text book of this political science fiction
is Claire Sterling's The Terror Network, the
drama of international terrorism. Still, somehow,
here too Haig is believable in this terror-para-
noia because in 1979 in Brussels he was the
target of an attempted assasination.

Yet capital is clear that Haig's spectacle
of terror and atomic dance of death is not an
acceptable risk. The real risk is neither tax
cuts nor adventuristic foreign policy (though
they produce thousands of mutilated corpses).
Capital's crucial problem is that there is
no leap in sight, just a continuation of
Carter's path: the dismantling of the assembly
line, the movement of industry to the South

and West, the further shake up of the working
class. Nor does the increasing expenditure for
arms open up new vistas, it is a middle industry
now: battleships taken from mothball, tanks,
and B-1 bombers are not technologically exciting
New Frontiers. To solve the problem requires
taking the Real Risk: an enormous Provocation
of the working class.

The massive cuts of welfare rolls, the sabo-
tage of public services, the promotion of
private schools, the shut down of public hospitals,
the end of CETA, the reinforcement of the police
with para-military fascist citizens corps in
the neighborhoods. In part, these measures attack
the material survival of certain 'marginal groups'
directly; this is specifically the case with
cuts in food stamps, welfare, meals programs
and medicade. Reagan appears determined to press
these attacks to the point where those affected
have to make a choice: either explode or rot.
Reagan challenges them to create disturbances
and is ready to put them down militarily.

The old game of the 60s, Revolt-Reform-Money,
can no longer be played. There is no integrating
social spending, no army of social workers and
programs of ghetto reconstruction. The incident
of Miami (still under Carter) pointed to this
new line. The blacks cannot get a cent from
their unrest. The 'struggle' does not 'pay' any
longer. Reagan's risk does not lie simply in the
danger of the explosions of the 'classical'
ghettoes. The victims of the cuts are not only
the racial minorities. Whites also feel directly
concerned. The reactions of the white neighbor-
hoods were prompt and violent. For example, there
were street, highway and tunnel blockades in
Bosstown. In Yonkers laid off firemen set
houses on fire themselves and did not put them
out. 'Marginal' parts of the working class like
part-time workers and jobless academics (who
previously found refuge in government sponsored
social programs) now have material reasons to
defend themselves. Many 60s types could return
more furious than ever to the streets soon.

A further risk for capital is the possibility
of a definitive collapse of the influential, me-
diating reformist organization such as the
churches among the blacks. The hard sweep destroys
their space for playing games and, by the same
token, capital loses a negotiating partner.
Consider the following scenario. The provoked
players are forced to invent new autonomous organ-
izations of struggle. Here Haig's absurd spectacle
of Terror shows itself to be Real. In the cities
a radicalization can arise which will tear down
the previous barriers against armed action. After
the first wave of demos are struck down, a second
can arise which would not be so easy to control
militarily. It is towards this possibility that
the terrorists propaganda is obviously aimed.
Capital seeks to make certain in advance that no
autonomous armed resistance can arise from indi-
genous populations. Should it arise, the conspir-
acy theory of World Communism would then be used
to discredit armed resistance. Certainly Haig
would have no trouble in showing international
'wire pullers' at work if armed opposition should
arise. The 'White Paper' has already been written
and the FBI and CIA has an arrest list waiting
in its desk drawer. The Terrorist of 1982 has

already been made. Naturally centralized terror-ism is a trap which working class struggle must avoid, but it is not so easy a matter. The State has the ability to dictate the conditions and it is interested in forcing the struggle to take its most controllable form. However, such armed action has only a propagandistic connection with the actual capillary and autonomous class resist-ance. Terrorism is, for the state, armed resist-ance made intelligible to itself. The U.S. state, however, risks getting a much more inconceivable resistance.

The retreat of the state from reproduction, the writing off of entire neighborhoods, the withdrawal of public services and the furthering of private business initiative (in the form of "free enterprise zones") can actually have a reverse effect: the resurgence of self-help organizations. The closing of public schools does not have to drive parents into religious of private schools, there are also alternative school projects that have been functioning for years already. As marginal as they may be, the mani-fold alternative and autonomous projects in various parts of the U.S. have collected experiences which in such a situation can be played out anew. The retreat into self-help by itself naturally brings yet more weakness and unpaid house-work for everybody. But without practical self-help every battle of resistance against the lasting intervention of the state by mili-tary means is hopeless. Reagan's risk, therefore, lies in the fact that self-help can combine with radical forms of struggle, which under the pressure of too little money and more repression can cause a very, very dangerous and explosive mixture to arise.

This mixture has already shown itself very sucess-ful in the recent youth revolts in Central and North-ern Europe. Here too the condition was the breakdown of the mediating organiza-tions and had an alter-native self-help back-ground. It is just this brutal attack of Reagan's that can save the alterna-tivist movement of America from a long rotting away period (and its irresistible develop-ment back into small business). U.S. capital thus stands before an actual risk, an uncertain future on which its entrepreneurial instinct can blow itself out. Even if entire groups should decline Reagan's invitation and prefer to idle away in laziness, to decay or kill them-

selves or allow themselves to die, that would be a defeat of capitalism. Determined resigna-tion and suicide can also be a weapon. A combination of resignation and explosive resistence can actually overload the most developed capitalist instincts for the future. The class would be complete Opaque.

The new U.S. model attempts through strength-ening the role of monetary command to avoid the two extremes: resignation and explosion. Instead of the State Embodied, money itself will exercise control also in the reproduction sector. The goal is not the destruction of the reproduction sector, of course, but a more efficient and disciplined reorganization. The dirty sorting machines of all kinds and the Maxwell's demons that have be-come dizzy shall be purified and refreshed. That is especially clear in the school, where because of the competition of the private and religious,
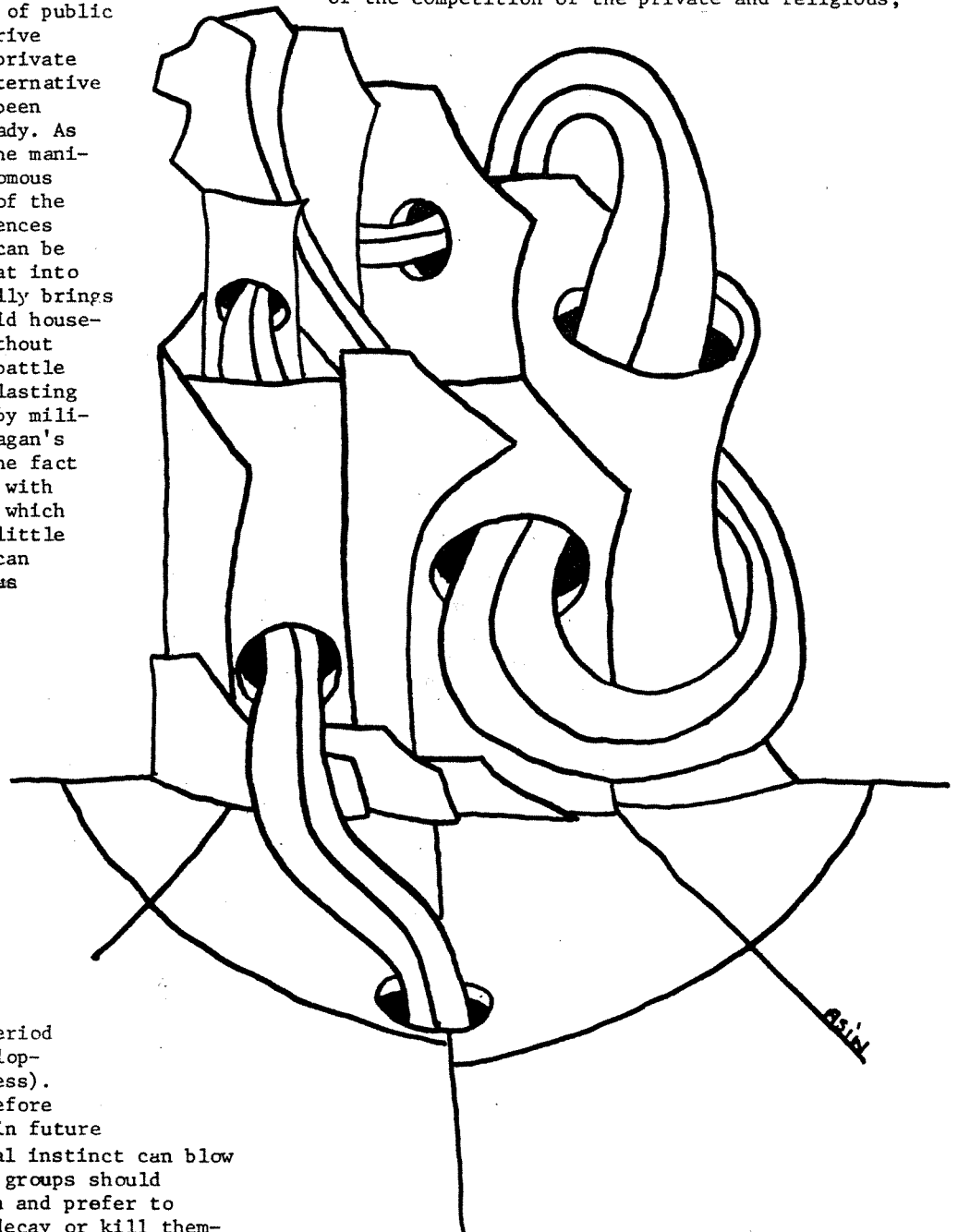
Catholic and fundamentalist schools, the financial control over students and teachers will be strengthened and the selection under the command of the dollar will be more direct and harder. Under the pressure of fundamentalist and racist groups there will be a willingness to institute a 'voucher' program for schooling that would end local financing of public schools and the public schools themselves. A "free market" control over education, the same holds true in relationship to the destruction of the public hospitals and sanitation workers.

But if Money is to Command, inflation is a loss of the form of command. It is logical that a depreciating dollar can't be a reliable means of control. It continually compromises its own function, which can be achieved through the misuse of credit cards and small loans and 'floats'. Time means gain for every debtor. Money is flowing with the stream of entropy instead of against it. The battle against inflation is therefore not a monetary problem, which even Friedman secretly realizes, but a problem of the reintoduction of work discipline and the real command function of Money. Breaking the budget itself does not create inflation, it is how it is broken that is important. For example, when the state is forced to introduce dollars into the reproduction sector it softens command. The social softening of individual risk makes workers generally fresh, lazy, shunning away from responsibility. It is not the dollar amount of the budget deficit that heats inflation but the "misuse" of the money for Safety instead of Command.

Thus it is more than logical to do what Reagan is doing: cut back on social expenses and increase military outlays (which certainly don't work to soften anything). Reagan is, as has been said, a provocation to class resistance, a kind of reagent of capital in the class soup in order to find out where it's at. Capital in its recent years lost its self-feeling and all its mirrors have become unclear. It didn't lack struggles in the mines, public services and atomic plants; however, no general subversive class project, no catastrophe was expressed in all this. Generally speaking these were battles to keep pace with inflation or defensive movements which scarcely openned new fronts. Capital worked without pleasure as did the workers. Carter was really the face of this lack of pleasure, a kind of Charlie Brown at the national level. Reagan provokes, through his classic conservative appearance at the ideological bazaar, all liberals, social democrats, socialists and progressive small businessmen. The old basis of the "European" analysis of U.S. capital, all the parties, coalitions, caucuses were powerfully stirred up. But it is clear that from this side no danger can grow to capital—the traditional left from the remains of the 60s are not able to mobilize new strata of classes in a new way; up to this point, nothing better has occurred to them than a new edition of the old mass demo in Washington (usually on a weekend afternoon). It is true that Reagan has lured this old political stratum from its hole, but not much else has come forth. A centralized representative answer from the 'rational' class middle

is no longer possible. No new politics has been proposed against Reagan for the simple reason that it is not possible to propose any kind of politics against Reagan—only a more inclusive culture, a life style with which to confront Reagan, to answer his provocation on his own level—Reagan can only be played out.

Basically it is a question of two mutually determining and dynamic Games. If Reagan wants to play the upper and lower parts of the working class (the programmers and the part-time masseuses) against the average, because he thinks that there can be no contact between these two extremes, then he is making a mistake. An effective answer to Reagan and the Surplus Value Transfer can only be a 'short circuit' between these two sectors. The first game, the game of the upper workers, is the computer game. The new anti-entropological offensive of capital is assigned to reliable selectors. The second generation of electronic Maxwell's demons can no longer simply be disciplined with dollars.

Because one relies on their creativity, one has to allow them a certain room to play and this must be upholstered with a wage-guarantee. It is here a question of high labor cost, which one cannot devalue simply through firings and unemployment. Nevertheless, precisely this generation of programmers, technicians and intellectuals is in a deep reproduction crisis. It is not a crisis of money income, but a crisis of desires, of the joys of life, motivation, boredom, a culture crisis. Misery reproduces itself as loathing, emptiness and a loss of self beyond material needs. This crisis is not a 'luxury' and it is not just 'imagined', it is as real as hunger, disease and lust. It leads in the same way to mutilations and death through psychic diseases and suicides. There is no absolute ladder of misery, thus the 'civilization crisis' of the upper workers is as threatening as the material crisis of the lower workers.

This crisis found its expressions in the ecology movement, the sects. occultism, art, Zen, yoga, philosophy, mathematics, etc. The movement against this misery cannot be a traditional movement for wages, but it is aimed directly at use values. One of its 'forms of struggle' (between desire and fulfillment there is actually no battle but direct appropriation) is, for example, the Computer Game. The game is appropriation of work time, machine-time and enjoyment of these use values all in one. Seen purely economically the damage done to capital consists of the sums which banks and corporations lose through direct computer embezzlement. In higher organic composition organizations, Time is the most Valuable factor in the Creation of Surplus Value. And it is just at this point that the game begins. Games form the entropological dissolution process in the sorting and control machines. And the model for most of these games is the 'strange loop', paradoxical, reflexive feedback routines which make it possible to play with oneself. The Game is the game with one's alienation. The Game presents itself as the enjoyment of alienation, and becomes therefore a kind of sabotage: the actual vetigo of the demon of Maxwell. The Game is also the dizziness of the unproductive use of time, because it puts the beginning always as the end.

The meta-stability of the Demon approaches instability. From this point of view Reagan can only be understood as an ironic game: an historic Jest.

Yet, the Maxwell's demons and philosophical players of all kinds can sway on 'till they fall over without bringing the system as a whole to a breakdown. Their work is unimportant for the production of Surplus Value. They are replaceable and there are mechanisms for the selection of the selectors. The games can certainly cause accidents but no breakdown. The Game is simply too Evanescent. Therefore the other 'game' is needed, the game of the streets, of the alleys, of physical confrontation with those who control the production of Absolute Surplus Value. This Game is called Riot, Looting, Disruption of the physical circulation of Constant and Variable Capital (blockading the terminals extracting Surplus Value: department stores, banks, loan offices). Dysinformation without Disruption has little effect, Disruption without Dysinformation is too quickly recognized and easily handled. Yet this too is not a political alliance, no united front politics, certainly no organizational 'Proposal'.

The overlay of the two Games, Disruption and Dysinformation, can only appear as a new culture, as a kind of transversal culture. It can arise as music, as fashion, life style--as the praxis of strife. IT CANNOT APPEAR AS A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE WITH A FUTURE--in this case it would no longer be dysinformative, but intelligible to capital. This culture is certainly ironic in that it puts the lower for the higher and vice versa. In Europe it has brought highly paid engineers and day laborers living on an existential minimum together in the street in physical confrontation with the police. It is the High Sign between the programmers and the street kids. They need one another in order to win--because without internal breakdown, the military machine can no longer be successfully attacked.

The illusion of the 'consumer society' which has until now held the classes in competition is increasingly fleeting. The Poor no longer believe in their Rise. There will no longer be a battle for 'simple prosperity'. Even the Polish workers, who in this respect would have cause for illusion, understand this---the struggle to Rise has become meaningless. Although the 50s have returned there won't be anymore 60s. Blacks and other 'minorities' will no longer come out for Civil Rights and Equal Opportunities. After the experience of the last decade they can only struggle for the abolition of all Rights and all Career Possibilities, or they would rather rot. The 'old values' live only in the Average sector of the working class and it is exactly this sector, paradoxically enough, that Reagan must try to eliminate.

In this sense either there are no longer any future possibilities, neither Utopian nor real, or there are many futures at the same time, a whole handful of lifestyles which tear at the centralizing Future of Capital, as it were.

The decentralization of space (through computerization) must be followed by a decentralization of time. It is exactly the refusal of all Homo-

geneity that can become the strength of the transvestite double-Game. All this sounds Abstract doesn't it? But it cannot be more concrete. What makes it abstract is only the 'inborn' drive of the old politicians who want to force New possibilities into old Patterns. These Patterns are, for example, reproposing Upward mobility, 'concrete' demands, Particular forms of struggle, Organization directed towards the mechanism of representation. That is considered Concrete, yet when one has seen 10,000 people on the streets of Zurich demonstrating merely against their 'dissatisfaction' and these same people are taking some physical risk for this, then one learns how concrete the Abstract can be.

Naturally it might seem that Opposition to Reagan's cutting of social programs is more Concrete. But we know that this is just a 'Jest', Reagan and his measures will not be able to resolve any of the Fundamentalist Problems of U.S. capital. The experiences with Reaganomics, such as the Laffer curve or the 'rational expectations' theory of fighting inflation, more and more unmask him and his new charlatans. Reagan's smile has already lost its fascination after a few months, even for U.S. capital, with the exception perhaps of the Defense industry. Self hypnosis is a dangerous political method because the smallest blink can destroy the trance.

REAGAN MAKES IT CLEAR THAT FOR A LONG TIME CAPITAL HAS NOT HAD A THEORY OF ACTION NOR TACTICS, but only continues to exist in that it does SOMETHING and thus does not cease to exist. Capital's brain is today probably one of the largest collections of entropy in the system.

Although Reagan's Show gives the illusion of a forceful will, decisiveness, clarity and safety, the motto for capital (and for us) has long been: EVERYTHING you know is WRONG, EVERYTHING you do is right. While the quantum physicists eagerly search for the 'glue-on' which can unite the elementry forces, Society becomes Fragmented, the forces of the system Disintegrate and only a Liar like Reagan can hold together the fragments by means of mind magic, rhetoric and Apocalyptic threats. Not for long however. The rags will soon be flying around the ears of this Fooled Fool. Not even a Russian tank will be able to save him.

Strange Loops places much focus on "high tech" workers, who are interpreted as actually or potentially disaffected and thus a subject of struggle. In the U.S. at this time we cannot view the mass of "high tech" workers as disaffected: their relatively high wages, degree of "creative" work, often flexible work schedule and orientation, fascination with the technology itself, and the space and resources to have "hobbies" - all add up, mostly, to relatively reliable workers for capital. One area of exception has been around nuclear power and weapons.

Nonetheless, disaffection is by no means impossible. In the not-distant future, we can expect a "shake-out" of the industry which will "rationalize" it with negative consequences for the workstyles of many of its personnel. Simultaneously, the number of workers entering the

field will begin to outstrip the number needed as the industry enters a "degradation of labor" phase. The results will be intensification and rigidification of labor, wage stagnation, and the ensuing need to reproduce one's work self in more intense and desperate circumstances. Disaffection must follow.

The "strange loop" in the working class is the connection between "high techies" and "marginals". What must be examined here are the questions of lifestyle and culture. Given the situation of non-work or marginal work for the "marginals" and the prevalence of "hobbies" for the "techies", the unifying theme is that life exists largely outside of work - even though the "techies" are able to incorporate a certain amount of play into work (a fact which will tend to disappear). Our question is, to what extent is "non-work" time a unifying force not just between two extremes of the class, but that runs through the whole class. Strange Loops indicates some lines of investigation of the forms of work refusal and the primacy of life-styles

rather than work as unifying class.What can be politically generalized in these refusals? Will the refusal of work generate a set of struggles in various sectors of the class which will not only generalize into the destruction of the new right, but also something new for the working class? Or will we only have the "choice" of warmed over, newly austere, social democracy?

To some extent the personnel of the anti-nu- clear movement represented the unification of the two poles: people who were self-marginalized but potentially high tech in terms of background and accessibility to training, etc. They were not much able, however, to generalize themselves or to move substantially the elements of each pole they incorporated. Nonetheless, they may be partly a lightening rod conducting the electricity of the strange loops in the future.

However, without strange loops in the class we cannot win substantial victories. The odd circuits and strange connections between and among various class sectors is vital to undermining and outflanking capitalist command and planning.

Conversation with a Demon:

The Education of Pedro Abono

ACT I

Time: Late December 1981.
Scene: Small cafe in Luquillo, P.R. - several
M.N. Collective members are sitting around
a table drinking rum and cokes and inter-
viewing Mr. Pedro Abono, whom they recently
met on their trip.

M.N. Briefly, what does your job involve?
P.A. I presently am working for a new national
human services program. The section that I am
working directly in is responsible for providing
some social and employment services to unemploy-
ed families in a southern state. I am responsible,
along with many others, primarily for screening,
monitoring and planning.
M.N. What is this operation all about?
P.A. At this point everything is being planned
and tested. The system is not in palce yet. The
fundamental idea is to determine what the
recipients are doing, what services are being
accessed, what their needs are, if they are work-
ing, and to locate them. The government is
funding welfare assistance for these recipients
and so the government finds it imperative to know

what is occuring.
M.N. How do you keep track of them?
P.A. There is an official line and an unofficial
line - the true one. Officially, we have a system
in place and know what we need to. For example,
we collect information through welfare offices,
the immigration office, the social security
office, etc. But in reality, we are attempting
to set up a system and right now we are only
guesstimating numbers..sort of pulling numbers
and assumptions right out of the air..its true
that we a few sources of information, but basic-
ally only old sources, and so who knows where
half the information comes from.
M.N. So you don't know what is really happening
to your recipients or what ever you refer to them
as?
P.A. I guess to a great extent that's the problem.
M.N. Do you have a plan to tighten up the system?
P.A. Sure, in fact, it is part of our work plan.
We are trying to develop what is called a manage-
ment information system (MIS),in a general sense,
a tracking system.
As a concept its there. We are attempting to de-
velop it, but we are encountering a lot of pro-
blems. We are always being frustrated with the
"old" system...To begin with, there are always
a large number of bureaucrats to deal with. A
large number of people fighting with each other
over power. Second, one is dealing with the
"old" system, which I believe, is mandated to
self-destroy. It is very easy to destroy a pro-
gram, to close it down. But if we want to develop
something , it is so much harder. Its like swim-
ming upstream. So, as you are required to devel-
op such a system, you design it and inform your
superiors you need,say half a million dollars.
They just can't imagine spending this type of
money for the required hardware and software, so
they put a stop to it. They want the information
and monitoring done but don't want to spend the
money. Furthermore, there are the problems we
face with the service providers and community of
recipients. They want to be informed of what we
are doing. They want to know everything..why we
are making the inquiries, what we are going to
do with the information. They want to be involved
in all decision making and then to receive all the
information. I mean, all these people get in the
way.
M.N. Well, you want to respect their rights..don't
you.
P.A. Definitely...But one is given an assignment
and then finds it impossible to do it..
You see, a federal act mandates and funds these
services which are designed to enable this pop-
ulation to become self-sufficient in the shortest
possible time. Now, our program pays for these
services if they are not otherwiese provided. But

we are never sure whether the people who are paid
to provide these services actually do the job.
Or that the people who are receiving the assis-
tance or services are actually suing them to
become self-sufficient. It isn't as if there is
a one to one relationship between the money and
work. So we have to check on this.
M.N. So it is your job to make sure that all
these people are working? That they are using the
money and services the way you have planned it?
P.A. Yes.. and to find problems.
M.M. You mentioned contractors..doesn't the state
hire and use its own workers?
P.A. No, at this point, our state agency does
not directly provide services. We contract out
to private agencies.
M.N. You mean, for example, the state is no long-
er planning to hire teachers as state employees,
to teach ESL classes and some?
P.A. Right... I think it is an old concept that
costs to much. I am sure that this is management's
way of dealing with public employee probems. It
appears to be much easier to contract for services.
M.N. When did this change come about?
P.A. I know this was a product of the Carter
Administration...the beginning of the present
"federalist" concept, in the sense that it put
the federal and state governments in a position
where they only fund,plan and monitor services.
The federal government allocates the money. It
also develops loose goals and guidelines the
states must meet if they are to participate in
the program. The states then take these funds and
broad guidelines and, in turn, coordinate, plan,
and work to insure the provision of these services.
The states are responsible for these funds and
so they provide for very stringent controls on
these expenditures. But in terms of the actual
provision of services, it is up to the state to
insure that it is provided in the most cost-
effective manner. I believe in most cased this
means contracting out, even to other state or
federal agencies.

To date the largest share of the budget is in
our welfare assistance category. It is interest-
ing now that we are discussing this, that al-
though we contract out for the the provision of
social services, and we have tried to develop a
similar mechanism to distribute welfare assis-
tance, we haven't been able to do it. The AFDC
system has turned out to be the most cost-effec-
tive mechanism to date...the system which pro-

vides us with the best means of controlling the
money as it is being given out.
M.N. Even though there is always the story that
welfare is filled with crooks, you are now saying
that the AFDC system is actually the most effi-
cient and best controlled one?
P.A. Yes, you are right.. the politicians are
always attacking the welfare system, but it
appears as if it is the most efficient public
program in the country. We have compared their
fraud or pilfering rate with that of private
industry and the welfare system does a much
better job.
M.N. So the idea here, in terms of welfare assis-
tance, is to limit it to 42 months?
P.A. This is another important component of this
federal act. It has built into it the limit-
ation of entitlements. Many think that the
Reagan administration began this, but Carter
appears to have been the first to implement it.
And right now the federal deputy secretary who
is in charge of the program is trying to get it
reduced to 22 months. Imagine that, the spokes-
person for the whole system is trying to reduce
the amount of time people will have to prepare
themselves, knowing that 42 months isn't long
enough for many.
M.N. 22 months??
P.A. Yes. But you know, we are being told that
we are doing all of them a favor anyway...we
don't owe them anything and aren't responsible
for them ...but I can't go along with this...
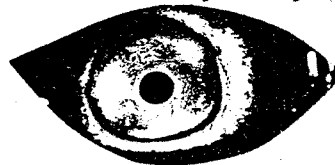
ACT II

Time: Later December 1981.
Scene: Living room of house over-looking Humacao,
P.R. – several M.N. Collective members are
sitting around smoking dope that they brought
while interviewing Pedro Abono.

M.N. I was thinking about what we were discussing
yesterday. It has a very diabolical aspect to
it. You know the whole line in physics...about
atoms in a diffusion process. From what I see,
there is an extremely elaborate program being
planned. It is a big tracing operation. I see
it being similar to a gas diffusion process.
You concentrate these people in particular places
and then you let them out to different parts of
the state...perhaps even the country,and then you
are supposed to keep track of them as you let
them out and as they diffuse out into the system.
It sounds like one of the most eloborate systems
that has been developed to trace not just masses
of people, but individuals as well. In fact,
one of the great breakthroughs in the 30's was
the gathering of vast amounts of statistics about
developments in society:social security, unemp-
loyment figures, gathering data on industrial pro-
duction and so on. These were mass aggregates.
They fit quite closely with the economic theory
of the time, Keynesianism...excuse me, I used to
teach.
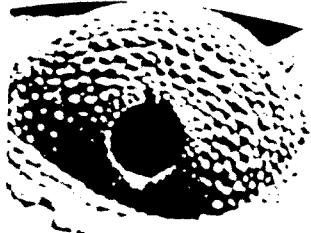
P.A. You see, this has been one of our big problems,
a limit we have been facing. We are trying
to track individuals, but we can't. We can barely
track numbers, mass numbers.
M.N. Is this a model for government of the future?
Do you feel that information gathering has expand-
ed to such a point that microscopic scanning is
possible?
P.A. That is interesting..I hadn't really thought
about it in that manner. It appears as if the
hardware for such scanning is available, but
we don't know wether people will put up with it.
However, there are a couple of things that make
this a special population for a test case. First,
they have for the most part all gone through .
hell, which to a large extent has made them more
tolerant than the average american, at least in
some ways. Second, for many of them, this is a
new country, a totally new environment, so that
they do not know what is normal and what is not.
We are presently able to collect a lot of infor-
mation from this group because they probably
think it is normal. I am quite sure that if we
try to collect the same information from other
people in this country, we will face a lot
more problems.
M.N. So,in a sense, they are a model population
for this tracking system?
P.A. Yes, so much easier to work with, except
for some,for example Haitians, they don't trust
the government at all.
M.N. And the Cubans?
P.A. Well, the new Cubans refuse authority also.
A large number who came out of Marriel had no
use for the Cuban government. Their experience
has led them to learn not to expect much from this
government as well. But, they know that the U.S.
will not deport them back to Cuba so they feel
stronger.
M.N. You mean they don't like this state more
than the other one?
P.A. Right. From all the problems that I have
seen, they aren't happy here. One of their main
problems involves being let down. As you know,
the old established Cuban community and the
American Government told them that they were going
to live a very good life here if they came. They
expected it, but they didn't get it. They are
really dissappointed. Some were thrown into
concentration camps and other were left to starve
in the streets, literally..
M.N. This tracking appears to be part of what is
called an MIS system, I've had some experience
with one. It was designed to collect certain
kinds of information on a particular population.
The team working on it had to change the system
three or four times in 18 months. We started
out trying to pick up and monitor too much infor-
mation. We had to continually simplify the system
and reduce the amount of information we picked
up-the range and specificity. Small increases in
information desired seemed to cause geometric
expansions in cost and work (computer time,

people to process and collect it, etc.).
P.A. We have had the same experience, and we have
also found that in collecting too much information,
one can also get into the position where it all
ends up not meaning anything. You get 20 pieces
of information on someone, but only need one that
maybe is not even collected. It all ends up being
a lot of work for nothing. We are presently try-
ing to get much of our software rewritten so that
we can get closer to getting what we want. How-
ever, you never know, in the future you may be
in a position to use the data that you are now
picking up,so you are afraid to throw it away.
Another big problem we have encountered is that,
as you say, it costs a lot and until management
can be convinced that they can benefit from the
MIS system, they don't want to put money into it.
They want us to come up with the information, but
they don't want to invest in it, partially
because they are under big pressure to cut back
on all spending. A further problem is that as we
are doing this, while we are developing our MIS
system, we are facing all sorts of problems each
day, crises, and we worry that we will not be
able to set our system up in time to deal with
it.
M.N. I see, in other words, if things shift too
quickly, your information gathering process will
be affected and unable to pick up the problem?
P.A. Yes, in two ways. One, it keeps us from doing
the work of setting up the systems. We end up

spending a lot of time trouble-shooting,which
is not our job. Two, we don't know what is hap-
pening while the system is not in place and so
we are afraid of being confronted with a crises
that we won't be able to deal with. You see,
people have been hired with a certain perspective
of reality, which doesn't allow them to see what
is actually happening.
M.N. The Workers in the program?
P.A. No, the administrators... the bosses. They
have a certain perspective of what it is like to
be a recipient, of what social workers do, of what
it is like to be in the street, which is I think
false and naive. It is like the whole idea of
cutting back on welfare assistance. They are
supposed to be watching out for the interests of
the state. In the short run, these cuts will
probably reduce the costs for the federal and
state governments, but in the long run, I don't
think it will. In fact, with a high burnout rate
for those who are put to work too quickly in bad
jobs, on top of not being mentally,physically,
or culturally prepared, they will put the state
in the position of paying out large
sums of money on cash assistance and services in
the future. But the managers don't want to listen
to people who have experience in the field, who
are dealing with the day to day crises and who
are monitoring what little information we are
collecting.But the managers think that the world
runs according to their desires and perspectives.
M.N. Their performance seems to be judged on the
amount they can cut?
P.A. Yes, I think you are totally right. But then
again, they are supposed to be setting up a new
type of system. I guess they feel that they them-
selves will be well rewarded for the destruction
of these programs.
M.N. There is somewhat of a contradiction here.
The job you are doing requires a lot more funding,
but in fact you are being told to cut back.
P.A. That's right. You see, other sectors of the
state, that in fact they want to reduce, they are
also doing the same type of thing to, except that
it is well planned,with no contradiction. They
are cutting back on the staff and resources and
forcing those who remain to do much more work.
They are not investing in their people and so they
are going to get fucked. This will cause serious
problems in the future.
M.N. Of course the agruement has been made by
Reaganites that it is OK because people will be
coming in and out of the private sector and they
train people better anyway.
P.A. You are right. And once again, in cutting
back on services, they are in fact trying to shift
the responsibility back to the family, and that
of course means the mothers, the women. More
work for women.
M.N. But you seem to think that the shift to the
private sector is in a sense almost cutting their
own throat? They are not even going to have the
personnel.

P.A. Yes..many of us do. I hope so..
M.N. We do to...so you envision a real crisis with
this type of system?
P.A. Yes, in the short run. However, if they are
given time to iron out some of their big problems,
like training, schools, facing reality,etc..-they
may be able to come out on top for a while. You
see they are not fools either. I am sure that
they plan to first destroy whole sectors before
starting to rebuild things again. They want to
get rid of all sorts of people who don't have the
same interests and aren't willing to play their
games. Meanwhile, in the short run, the system
is not prepared, so if there is a real crisis now,
I don't think they will be able to handle it.
M.N. If they are given the time? Or if we don't
come up with new forms of trouble?
P.A. That's right... they are working against
time and they know it.
M.N. In other words, as long as the recipients
and the staffs accept their orders, eventually
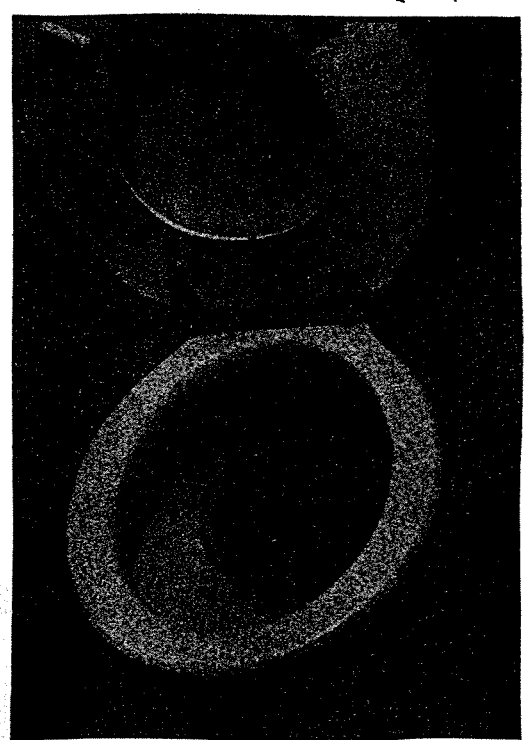these problems will be ironed out?
    -at this point Pedro brings out his own
     stash and roles a few joints..after a few
     minutes.
M.N. Just one question then Pedro: Am I paranoid..
Is this just control,for controls sake?
P.A. Well, when it comes down to it, we are try-
ing to plug 300,000 people a year back into the
economy. To make sure that they become "respon--

sible","productive","law abiding","hard working"..
the old American virtues. All in the shortest
period of time and with no real money.
M.N. So they are thinking that by putting a lot
of pressure on these people, by limiting the
length of entitlements, that that will push
them to make themselves "productive" and
take the jobs that no one else wants?
P.A. Well they say they don't want them to take
the jobs that no one else wants...but that is what
happens anyway. I for sure don't , but I see it
happening. Of course, many work against the
system and are better off for it.
M.N. What is your program going to do if it
doesn't work?
P.A. I don't know. There have been many problems,
but we really haven't faced a big crisis yet.
However, the welfare rolles are growing fast and
that is becoming a bigger and bigger issue..So
this may be an important sign that it is not work-
ing...Pretty good dope..huh?
    See,its so frustrating. The administrators
that I am working with have spent the last 5 to
10 years cutting back and destroying public
service programs. It has been their profession
to destroy the welfare. I think this leads us
to the problems of the welfare state, whose era
is now being brought to an end. People are tired
of it because they are not getting what they want
from it. One of the main reasons that this began
happening in the late 70's is bacause government
politicans and top administrator's planned it..
people like Weinberger. They used the excuses of
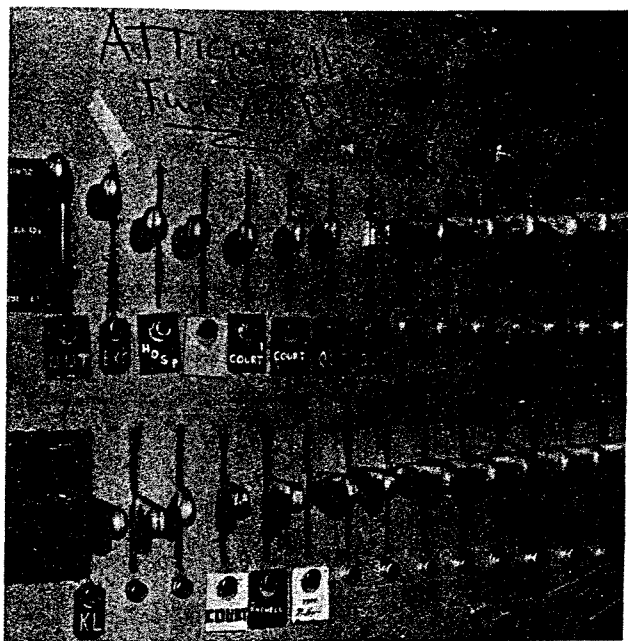
fiscal crisis and more to cut back on benefits
and staff, demoralized everyone, made it impos-
sible for social workers and public sector work-
ers to do their jobs. I know this is still occur-
ing because now, as we try to develop something
new to deal with people's needs, its impossible.
M.N. You are saying something different. The
most common agruement is that we can't afford it
anymore. The problem with the welfare state is
that it sabotaged the work ethic. People not work-
ing as hard meant that there was not enough money.
There were too many "freeloaders"-like these
welfare people- sapping the productivity of America.
And the only way to recover prosperity is to do
away with them and put people back to work again..
which seems to be what your program is all about
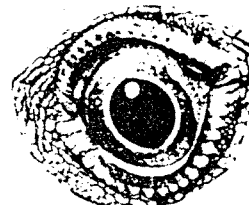Pedro, to get them to be hard working "productive"
citizens.
P.A. I think your analysis is basically correct,
in the sense that the state and the system wants
to put people back to work, wants to stop putting
large quantities of money for people's needs.
The administrators see things as you describe
them. Their problem has been to get enough people
disenchanted or disillusioned with the state so
that they will take the cuts. To a great extent
you have to pit one worker or citizen against
another,..and basically get them to think that
the other is living off the other.
M.N. Aren't they saying that there is no more
money now?
P.A. Yes. But the reality is totally different...
We all know that..In our programs we have money
that we have never spent, and the administrators
would gladly give it back rather than use it to
meet some very critical needs. This is something
else they have been successful at doing, and
perhaps we have also done it to ourselves. That
is, accepting austerity and living with it. When,
if you look at the flow of money in this country
and the world, it is an incredible amount. The
government has it when it wants it.
M.N. But are you using the money to do the tracking..
dectecting?
P.A. No, we haven't been able to get the MIS sys-

tem into place yet.
M.N. So, you are supposed to monitor those people
that don't get taken care of by the private sec-
tor, providing them with what is called a safty net.

P.A. Right. When society in general doesn't deal
with people's needs and as you know that is a
very political question,what needs are, we are
to step in. But we are being told every day that
the private sector is to take over more and more
because they do things better. So far we are
spending a lot of time and money trying to get
them to do it with very little success!! .As far
as I am concerned, it has been a waste of time,
perhaps a way to give business a big tax break.
And get this....Another concept that is being
pushed is that we-the state-are no longer respon-
sible for people's lives. How are we supposed
to get people to believe this?..By using time..
taking time to respond to a problem. Of course,
that could blow up in their faces, but so far it
hasn't. We are to use time to get people to real-
ize that they con't depend on us and so they have
to find another way of dealing with their problems.
But you know, a lot of them don't.
M.N. Is there another way?
P.A. Is there another way? .. I am sure there is.
What it is, I don't know. But one thing is for
sure, as long as they don't have to pay for it,
it is not a relevant question.

The [...] is a beast of muddy brain
that know[s...]
and there [...] stands loaded with wood and stone,
[...] powerless [...] of a mere child: guide it by bit and rein,
one kick would [...] enough to break the chains,
but the beast [...]
and what the child demands, it does,
[...] ts of [...] ears understands,
[...] by [...]
[...]
with its [...] ands it [...] es and [...]
gives its [...] breath and war [...]
for [...] poured out by [...]
[...] ut one will [...] beside himself and weeps,
but this it knows not
and if one arises [...] out the truth,
[...] is him unforgiven.

Thus wrote Tomaso Campanelle in a dungeon after his failed
attempt to inspire the masses in an insurrection against
the Spanish domination in southern Italy.

[...] could never hear them scream
s [...] tortured to the butcher [...]
[...] No! What would the hangman [...]
[...] us.
[...] we can keep our house
[...] order.
[...] ll them that [...]
no scream be heard
and make it known
in every corner of the country
that S [...] ing is the [...]
[...] iterate [...]
[...] the slivering site
[...] deeply mind you.
For a Word
300 lashes
until the bones are bare,
the teary ones will
have their eyes pulled [out]
[an]d on the head that [screams]
[the] Ax will Fall."

*Thou art cursed with a curse, for though hast robbed me,
(saith the Lord)
Of my corn, my wool, my flax, etc.
Thou has robbed me of my Tythes, for the Tythes are mine,
And the beasts on a thousand hills
yea all thy bags of money,
hayricks, horses, yea all that thou callest thine own are mine.*

In the chaos of the shooting, the assailants fled on foot.
Several of them commandeered cars on the nearby throughway and sped away.
Miss Boudin, who was on foot and unarmed, was captured on the scene
by an off-duty New York City correction officer.

*I am come to recover all my outward, or civill rights, or goods
Which thou callest thine own.*

The six moneybags
Containing all the stolen money
Were recovered from the U-haul van and the car that crashed.

*Thou hast many bags of money, and behold
Now I come as a thief in the night
With my sword drawn in my hand, and like a thief as I am--
I say
DELIVER YOUR PURSE, DELIVER SIRRAH! DELIVER OR I'LL CUT THY THROAT!*

Miss Boudin was among the last of the Weather Underground fugitives
to be captured.
According to District Attorney Gribetz,
Miss Boudin still is liable
For prosecution in Illinois
on the Chicago
Bail-jumping charges.

*I said (once more)
Deliver, deliver, my money which thou hast to him
and to poor creeples, lazars, yea to rogues, thieves, whores, cutpurses
who are flesh of thy flesh.*

Other parallels were drawn by authorities
Have ALL THINGS common
To armored car holdups last June 11 at the Hunts Point Termina
Or els the plague of God will rot and consume
Last December in Brooklyn
All that you have.
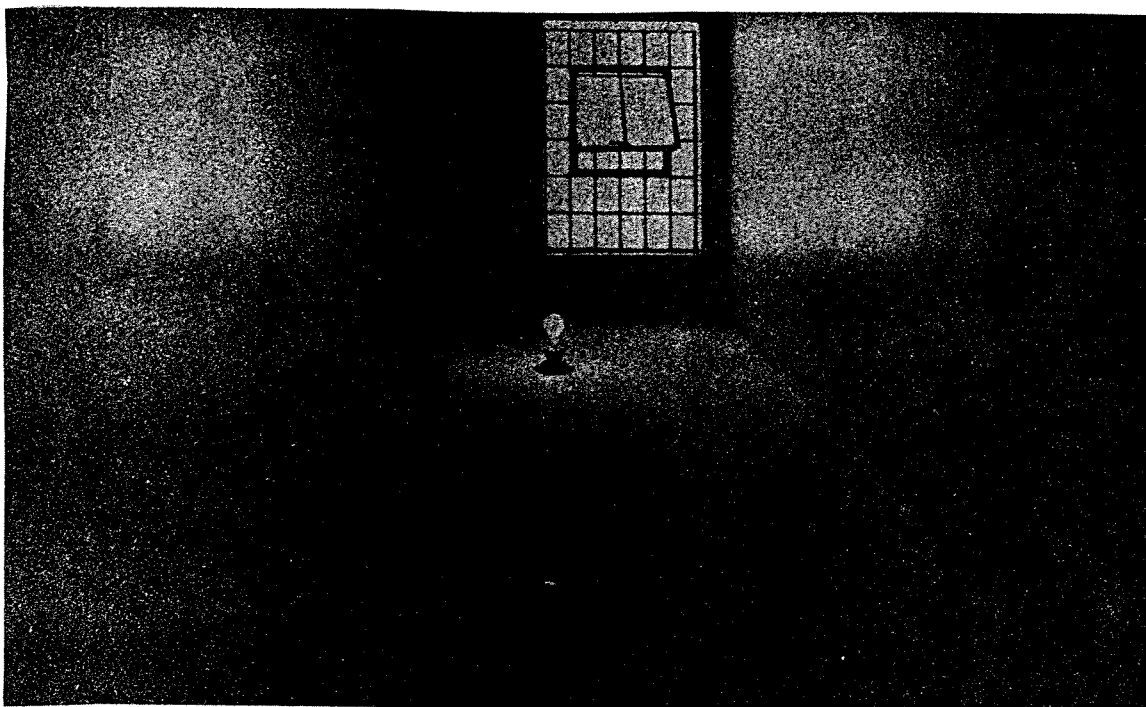
ACT III

Time: Late January 1982.
Scene: Living room of modern bright clean new
apartment in Atlanta, Ga. - several M.N.
Collective members are sitting around doing
several lines of Pedro's coke while interview-
ing him(he is the only one who can afford it).

M.N. You know..We have been doing a lot of
thinking about you and people like you work-
ing in what we call the "detection state"
When I think of you, my mind goes back to a
strange, kind of mystical creation of this
physicist of the 19th century, Clerk Maxwell,
who wrote about what was later called Maxwell's
demon.
P.A. Ah..yes..Stanislaw Lem plays on his stuff.
He's one of my favorites. I am looking for the
Spanish version of his book.
M.N. That is interesting. Anyway, the story
goes, this Maxwell's demon was supposed to vio-
late one of the basic laws of physics by detect-
ing whether particles in a gas were going fast
or slow. And when he detected the speedy ones
he was to open a gate and let them through to
a resevoir where only fast molecules would be
going; and close the gate whenever a slow mole-
cule tried to come through. He was able to cre-
ate out of no temperature differentiation, a
temperature differentiation. On that basis,
work can be created. This was like a mythical
creature, you might say.
P.A. I remember something about this; but I ne-
ver applied it to my situation.
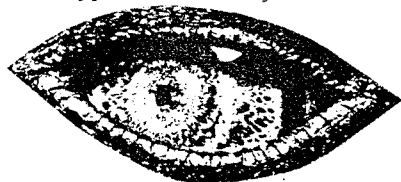
M.N. Norbert Weiner, a man who wrote cybernetics
stuff, argued that this process can actually go
on for only a short period of time, that this
Maxwell's demon can work; but eventually the
demon wears out, because the demon itself is
subject to that basic law, entropy, wearing down
to a standstill. With practice, a demon can
work for a long time. Still, Weiner is saying
that in the long run Maxwell's demon is going
to die.
P.A. So you are implying that I am working as
a Maxwell's demon of sorts?
M.N. Well, what are you trying to do, what is
all this detection about? To find the good work-
er versus the bad worker .
P.A. Brilliant... brilliant...
M.N. Well, you have that problem, don't you?
P.A. First, I don't see myself as a demon.
M.N. Demon, not in a bad or good sense, of
course. The idea of a demon goes back, probab-
ly to ancient days when the demon was worker, a
Super Human worker - demonic energies, powers
beyond the regular. Don't necessarily take it
in a Christian sense, all right?
P.A. O.K...O.K...because we are now with the
Reagan types supposedly fighting evil.. you
know..communists..atheists..gays..foreigners..
God against evil as Mr. Reagan says.
M.N. We know better..don't we, Mr. Abono?..ha..
ha..ha..don't we really?
P.A. O.K., O.K., I think that what you are say-
ing, now that I can think about my job situa-
tion, my relationship with the people who I
deal with..well, I really don't deal with peo-
ple, unless there is some trouble shooting to
do. It's true, I just watch the molecules go
by, watch the impressions on the screen, read
the computer print-out telling me where the com-
puter detected the molecules I couldn't see. I
am supposed to categorize people by the amount
of work they are doing or are able to do.

M.N. But Weiner said you are going to be affected by that selection process, and eventually you are going to get worn down. Is that happening to you?

    -a few more lines-

P.A. First, let me point out that, as I explained earlier, I still don't do just monitoring, as I am supposed to, due to the fact that the system is still not in place. I can't concentrate on detecting as I now realize that I am supposed to. However, I do that work too, and the more I do it, the more things look the same. Its frustrating.!

M.N. Frustrating ...in what way? Why are you frustrated Pedro?

P.A. Well, I am facing many levels of frustration..many of my fellow workers are feeling the same way..It's not the old burnout syndrome, it's not like you are dealing with so many people that you can't deal with them anymore..it takes another form. It's like watching too much t.v.: you get so that you can't tell the difference between the background and the things that you are watching.

M.N. Is it kind of an informational versus an emotional burnout?

P.A. Exactly, because you don't deal directly with individual's problems anymore..only you deal with your fellow workers, but even then there aren't that many of them. I have done social work before, where you go home and you don't want to talk to anyone...it's the type of burnout of not wanting to answer the phone, read, think... and you also realize that you are being fed lies, you process lies, and infact you are living a lie. You can't trust anything anymore... this has become clearer and clearer to me after Puerto Rico...They want to pick the good from the bad

worker, but that is as far as it goes. After that, they don't really know much. You start realizing that the things you are told are less and less true. You realize that the things you report and have to say are not true either.. You realize that you are also being watched and screened by someone else...at the same time.

M.N. But if you are given enough time, eventually the problems will be worked out,...the system will succeed?

    - another joint is rolled and passed around-

P.A. Yes, given the time..time..time..but of course only until. And until new problems arise which will require another response from the state.

M.N. How are your fellow demons dealing with the development of the new state?

P.A. Lets put it this way, I feel that there are two types of, as you say, demons; people like myself who for one reason or another have ended up with these jobs and don't really believe what we are told, and those who at least for now seem to believe in it and want to work with it, make it their career to detect for the system. Let me deal with those like myself, I know more about them and at this point they are more crucial to the system. We are people who have been forced into these jobs as our old jobs have disappeared or aren't affordable;from higher education or social work or the arts. As you can see, I couldn't live like this on a professor's salary.. ha..ha..including all this coke..want a few more lines?

    -everyone takes a few more lines-

So although, I was not trained to be a detector, I like that term, I am working as one. In the beginning, it wasn't clear what I was supposed to be doing, but with time it is becoming clearer and clearer. I am now realizing, especially after these discussions, what role I am playing. And that, let me tell you, makes it harder and harder to deal with... to eat their shit. But, the people that run the programs, although they have a narrow view of society,they basically know when people are fucking off.

M.N. AHA

P.A. Like for example, many of us were active in the past in, for example, affirmative action struggles, organizing unions, welfare struggles, etc.. Now we are dealing with a situation where we don't see these struggles...things are controlled so well, they have put us in totally new terrain, terrain that they control very well so far. So besides dealing with the frustrations of one's tasks, one has to deal with this type of working situation. This means much more work. You end up having to fight battles that were, I thought, won many years ago. Like affirmative action. I think it is almost non-existent where I work...they don't even hire "tokens"

    -more lines and a few joints-

M.N. Given your position, have you thought of how you or we can deny the system of the time it needs? When you say that the system needs time,

you mean two things..first, how long the system will take to be put into place, and how long it will operate. You first have to create the demons and the door. Then you have to make sure they select. Given this,you are in fact in potentially very strong positon. That is, in yourself as a demon you can theoretically cause a lot of problems and not provide the system with time to let it get what it wants.

M.N. Hey..what power! There are a lot of us in that situation. However, there are several problems that get in our way. Many of us are pretty isolated. They have put us in different places and broken a lot of our connections. It is a new terrain. We must find new ways of moving and connecting. You need to make more contacts and play more games. You know that as you are working for the government and in a sense embody their policy, just because you are doing the work, there is a tendency to get caught up in it. As a worker, you know that you are being watched as well. But since you are isolated and alone, its hard to do a lot about it.

For example, I am in the position where I need the money and I have had to pick the best situation, given little room to move because they have already weeded out many of us who have always played games together. Of course, one musn't forget that we are still here and we don't agree with their policies, okay? They know we

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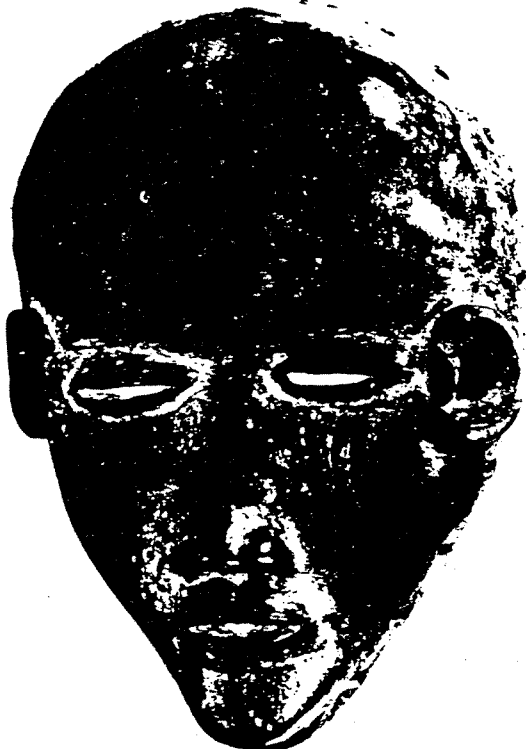
are doing work, but they spend a lot of time worrying about us:all the leaks, all the late work. Even Stockman, he really pushed a certain line, but it turns out that he really wasn't sure he believed in it either. Not that I see myself being like him. But of course there is always the good demon who really believes this shit, really embodies the new state. They are the ones who,in the long run, will be able less and less to detect, as pointed out by Weiner. His thesis will apply most to them in the long run. They will be the ones who probably are going to survive these jobs, if the new state survives.

M.N. But the question is, are they going to be the ones who are going to know what is going on? In fact, you said that this is not the case. You are saying that unless the demons who burnout very quickly actually set up the system and the programs, those who survive, who are in a certain sense more blind, will not be able to do the job.

P.A. I think this is the problem they face with Stockman. Stockman played some games. I am not going to compare myself with him, but..

M.N. You play your games too,Mr. Abono.

P.A. Right..Stockman believed in supply side economics, at least he said he did...but I never did...

M.N. You were never asked..

P.A. True...ha ha Still, if he leaves before he has set things up for them, they are going to be in real trouble. In my situation, I was hired because I had an academic background, I had been involved in community organizing, and dealt with minorities. The people who hired me didn't have this experience or knowledge. The knew their weaknesses.

Of the 30 or so of us that were hired, most came from the same background. Some didn't - basically the ones who are now being trained to replace us, the one-sided demons. Of course some of them will change too, I am sure. But, it may be too late for them. Anyway, of the 30, some had to leave early because they either played games without covering themselves or couldn't take the shit anymore. The rest of us, excluding the one-side demons, are still around, not agreeing with what is happening, but sticking it out. We know we are needed now. But with time, if things get properly set, they won't need us, and it will be much easier to get rid of us.

M.N. You will have set up a system which by monitoring 8 or 9 pieces of date will give them a fairly good idea whether a molecule is "fast" or "slow" and where it is headed. So they won't need you. Right now, they need you. They have to go for the person who can detect what is going on, who can translate the detection into the creation of the MIS system. Your contradiction is creating an MIS system that is going to replace you and you are suspicious of anyway.

P.A. We are dealing with something new here. Besides, in the last few years I have learned that I never know at the moment I do something on whose behalf I am doing it. It takes a little while to know who you are really working for, who is benefiting from your work. When I started doing this work, I knew something different was happening. I was playing a whole new game and

when you started talking about these Maxwell's
Demons back at Luquillo beach and Humacao, it all
started falling into place.

In the past, I thought my job was detecting
needs...not people. But, I see this whole thing
in a different way now. Its not a question of
detecting need. See, I have been told that I
have to detect needs so that we can address them.
But everytime I detect new needs, they just take
notes of what I say and never address them, unless
they have to or it means getting more work out
of people. In fact, they seem to be afraid to let
us monitor and register the real needs because
then somebody will use that information to demand
something. The tell people that as long as they
don't see the needs, they are not there. Now, it
is getting clearer..

Like I said, the needs are always politically
defined. For example, they are now coming up
with a concept called Prime Wage Earner, taken
from CETA. They say that they only want to de-
tect his needs. I say "his" because the "primary
wage earner", is supposed to be someone who has
the most potential for earning the highest wage,
in a family:so the man. It basically sets up a
situation where women are once again discriminat-
ed against. They even have the audacity to claim
that it is not sexist.

They also only want us to detect short run
trends and problems. This is one of their blind
spots. Because they are not trained to think too
far into the future.
M.N. It appears that the assesment of needs is
largely the attempt to determine which needs are
the most explosive, immediately, disruptive,
hoping that if they prevent blow-ups, they will
get more time to transform the system.
P.A. That's true. Well, the difference between
the old state, the "mediation" state, as you call
it, and the new "detection" state is that the old
state said, "we are going to be there..to
"mediate" between you and your employer, private
capital, etc." The "detection" state says "we
are not going to be there unless we have to.
Of course, we are going to be watching you." The
"long run" is no longer the responsibility of the
state, nor of the private employer, private
capital, ..but of the people. Their only long run
goal is to have only the chief administrator
working. Everyone else will be out the door.
They are saying to us, when you are finished,
we are going to kick you out.

M.N. Everyone must know that by now.
P.A. Sure, the manager brags about it.
M.N. There is a contradiction here - you are
saying that you are all quite isolated and
there is an enormous quantity of information
that you are all sharing together.
P.A. Yes, I agree, but I think this is also a
problem which society as a whole is facing.
M.N. Well, as a demon, what do you suggest that
atoms do with this new state?
P.A. Well, if I were an atom and of course I
realize that for a higher demon, I am an atom,
someone else is tracking me, I feel it more and
more. I process information in a cogent manner

for the state. So if the atoms are going to
deal effectively with the system that we are
building, they are going to have to know that
they are dealing with an information system:
A system which works to pick up information
from everyone and then either keep it from it-
self or return it in a distorted or modified
form. The information being picked up is for
managers and politicians, not for the people.
In this sense, democracy, (ha!) or what little
"democracy" there was is being destroyed.
For example, I have noticed lately that the
is a move to destroy all forms of real decision-
making input by people, even doing away with the
pretence of giving that power. They want
people to give information, but that is all.
I have seen state managers again and again
go out of their way to change regulations to
eliminate formal decision-making input mechan-
ism. They use whatever reason they can get away
with: too much bureaucracy, takes too much time,
costs too much money. The atoms should be aware
of this and work to subvert it. They are deal-
ing with a "one-way-mirror". Next, "molecules"
should know the types of information the state
is collecting from them and work to give it bad
or disinformation. The problem is how to do it.
M.N. You are saying there are many different le-
vels of information. You have access to a lot
of information which you are supposed to use,
yet you also have a hard time getting hold of a
higher level of information perhaps collected
on you. Now, it is useful to get hold of all
this information that is being collected. How-
ever, the system is making it harder to get
hold of information at higher levels. If you
are out there, being a molecule, you are not
getting, or you are not supposed to be getting
any information from a level above you, even if
you are working within the system as a demon on
a lower level. How do you get this information?
Part of the answer is for people in your posi-
tion who have access to this information to
share it with those who need it and are seeking
it. That way, everyone has the same information.
What can the demons do to get this information
out? First of all, leaks..the whole field of
leaks.
P.A. You are right..go ahead.
M.N. There are two ways. This can be one of
Midnight Notes Theorems: One is to pass on dis-
information to the system, and the other is to
pass down and across the information you have
collected and involving your instructions and
regulations. What kind of information do you
pass up and let these higher demons collect
from you? You have to come out with bad infor-
mation that is plausible and that will make it
hard for them to do their planning. You also
have to try to get many others to do the same
thing. If you do it by yourself, it may be so
insignificant that it may never even matter.
But then it might. Meanwhile, you have to take
the 'real' information that you have collected
and pass it on to the molecules, leak it out.
Send wrong information in one direction and cor-
rect it in the other - exactly the opposite of
what the state wants.
P.A. Hold on! Don't forget! Ever present in
these games and leaks has to be the concept you

people always talk about, the refusal of work,
doing things with the least amount of work.
Otherwise people, whether demons or molecules,
will just burn out. The strategy which we are
discussing cannot become another form of work!
You have to enjoy your games, "enjoy your strug-
gle".

Many of us demons are feeling quite isolated,
but that is not the whole story. We are not
dead yet. Many of us have formed informal links,
sharing many pieces of information - about our
jobs, about the information we pick up, etc.
This "network" of information is growing
each day and is becoming a pain in the ass
for management. Issues of pay and work si-
tuations usually start off the relationships.
Telephones always bring people closer together
when they are physically seperated, but I al-
ways wonder who's listening. I am always care-
ful.

You know, going back to this whole issue of
refusing work - It has become very clear to me
that the times when I am least able to think and
react to what I am doing is when I am working
hard, over-worked, the times when they pass the
work on to me. So I think one of the most im-
portant ways to fights back is to pass the work
back to them. The more the better. If they
realize that every time they make you work, you
make them work more, they will soon stop. Keep
them hopping!!
MN(1) That's right. That's the point. The more
they hop, the shorter the life span of the de-
mon.
P.A. This is the best way to deal with the de-
mons who love their work, or any fellow worker
who loves his work, just like the boss: Make
them hop, give them all the work that they love
to do.
M.N.(2) Ha..ha.. give the work to your enemies.
P.A. That's a beautiful quote..give the work to
your enemies..only to your enemies!!
M.N.(1)I've thought something! The signal-noise
ratio in information theory!
P.A. What?
M.N.(1) You know, every time the information is
passed from one level to another, it is corrupt-
ed and played with; and so, by the time the in-
formation gets up to the highest level where it
will be used to make basic decisions, it will
have become so completely unconnected with reali-
ty that this will cause them to make decisions
that can cause enormous problems for the system.
P.A. You mean they become unable to detect the
true signal through all the noise..and they then
use this information to make wrong decisions..
what a feeling of power I have all of a sudden.
MN(2) It's the coke!
P.A. It's time to play some noisy games I see.
M.N.(1) Ha..ha.They have to be given the sense
that they know, but they don't. All coups are
based on that actually...Ha.ha..ha.. Now that
we are talking about information theory..there
doesn't seem to be a channel for us to circulate
the information among ourselves, or to our mole-
cules - welfare mothers and fathers, office wor-
kers, factory workers, students, whoever the
hell else we want to pass it on to.
M.N.(2) Well, that's the irony of the moment..To
transfer information you need two things - a

channel and a code. The channel is there.
It's only for the using. For example, take
the casette and the recorder that we are using
right now..everyone has them.. they also have
television-, telephones, etc...everyone has a
fantastic amount of possibilities of communica-
tion with each other on an immediate level. One
of the things is to use those channels. Think
about Khnomeni, how he was able to use his tapes
even in "primative" Iran: the electronic ayhatol-
lah.
Everyone: Ha..ha..ha..
M.N.(1)The second thing is the code.. the language
..we have to create a new language..we have to
get a lot more information out with a lot less
ideology. The left tends to spread a lot less
information with a lot more ideology. But there
has to be ways of disseminating this information
..oh, no, of course not you Pedro..Ha.ha..ha..
P.A. Well, maybe I would like to join in on the
fun.
M.N. (1) Oh, a convert!
M.N. (2) I was detecting that we might have
found a convert back in Puerto Rico. Ha..ha..
M.N. (1) They have assumed that they (the state)
can win by denying us information, We can win
by getting this information out. Imagine what
millions can do with all this information! Infi-
nite wealth!
M.N. (2) It's the wealth we really want to share
..what does it mean to get the information out?
What is the information..it must be more than
just reports and statistics...Where the money is
..that there is money, where it is, and how to
get it..Where the rest of the wealth is ..that
there is such wealth, where it is, and how to
get it.

Credit to the Parties in Brixton:

Malcolm X Day at Attica

It's May 16, 1981, and we're at the N.Y. State Correctional Facility at Attica celebrating the birthday of Malcolm X. For foul deeds done behind these thiry-foot walls the millionaire Rockefeller earned his sobriquet, "the Butcher", as history will always and forever remember.

This afternoon the Attica Institutuion Band provides the opening entertainment. Their's is a powerful, contradictory sound. Some had wanted disco, others jazz. These wizards offer "fusion" which blasts across the gymnasium ricochet off the cement-block walls. They practice five nights a week, play Saturday and Sunday before the movies and do special concerts like today's. A red, green, and black cloth of sound is unrolled across the people who quietly and expectantly sit at the picnic tables athat have been spread about.

"It's a rat race in here," a prisoner explains to me, "only the strong survive. The evils of the outside society are intensified in here: it is individualistic, predatory, profiteering, parasitic. Inmates are divided against each other."

The Afro-American Cultural Studies Group has organized today's celebration and it seems that they have brought every art, ancient and modern, to help break down the isolation of the inmates. "The policy of the A.A.C.S.G.," its spokesman announces, "is to educate, to agitate, and to organize." In the few years of its existence it has had to struggle against great odds. Its leaders have been shipped out or put in the hole. Its members have been harrassed. Bureaucratic pricks and thorns have been strewn across its path.

Malcolm would say that you "have to wake people up first, then you'll get action. But how do you wake them up?" he'd ask. "Not by telling them of their exploitation. No, you wake them up to their humanity, to their own worth, and to their heritage." It's this that the A.A.C.S.G. does in Attica. It teaches African and Afro-American history. It teaches the history of Attican too. "our being here. This is a product of struggle. Thirty-one people died in D-yard so we could be here today."

1971: ten years have passed.

Apparently, the guards have changed too. Besides the crewcutted, beer-bellied lifers, there's a number of long-hairs, some Blacks, even a woman, and quite a few Kluxers. There's a strong union, a state job, good pay, not bad hours and security. "I don't care who you are. Put on a uniform and sooner or later you'll start oinking". I scribble away on a notepad. Two guards approach me. They escort me to the sergeant's office. "No notes", the say. After a brief exchange of views duriing the course of which a great many members of the A.A.C.S.G. have assembled at the office door it is agreed that I may continue to take notes as long as I refrain from taking down a man's name or number. "Don't use your right name, no, no, no, no", as Fats Waller used to say. As to numbers, who wants them anyway?

John Fairbrother, the oldest and chiefest of the brothers takes the mikcrophone and asks for silence. He tells us, "Listen, please", and the courtesy and command within his pronounciation of that word, "please", instantly makes you understand why he's the first speaker. We listen. He paces backwards and forwards. He carries the mike as if he were singing jazz. He wails his wild notes. His words are in the Malcolm plain style.

"Let's learn his language", Malcolm would say of the white oppressors. "If his language is with a shotgun, get a shotgun. Yes, I say if he only understands the language of a rifle, get a rifle". John Fairbrother's is a helicopter language, whirling and chattering from above, bringing succor to the hurt and menace to his enemies. "Music of the devil", somebody at our table says and everybody chuckles. When he finishes his speech, someone else notes, "Within a month he'll be shipped out: just watch".

Besides music, dancing. Three sisters have travelled down from Buffalo for the occasion. "Sure, everyone tells us not to come down here 'cause we're sure to get raped or murdered or at least robbed". She laughs and laughs. Here is the drum. Here is the dance. These are Afro-American dances: the Nile, the Euphrates, the Congo, the Mississippi flow in the four limbs of each of the dancers. In the drums we hear the voodoo of Toussaint, of Harriet Tubman, of the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement.

John Fairbrother, after their performance, asks a sister to dance. What formalities, what kindnesses, what gentle courtesies, these beautiful dancers cause! Three sisters, a hundred brothers: in that hideous architecture of evil, a hundred and three mirthful countenances.
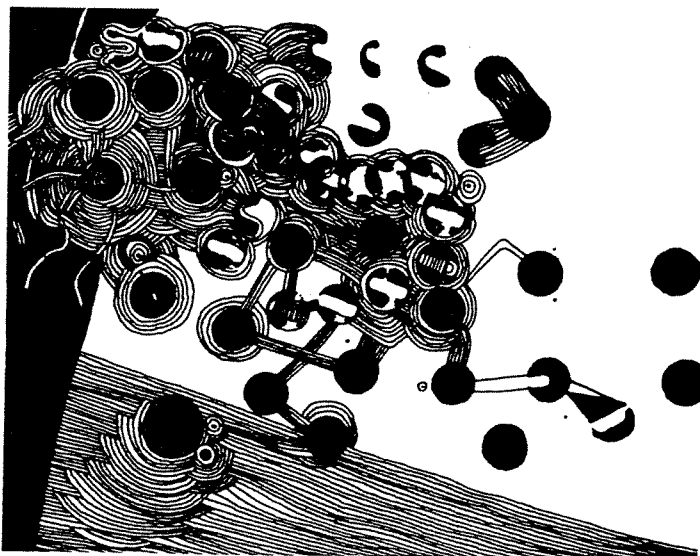
"Ballots or bullets", the most famous three words of the decade. Malcolm would start out slow. "It'll be ballots or bullets, "he'd drawl. He knows you've heard it before, that you're waiting for it. "It'll be liberty or it will be death". Yes, yes we're with you, this continuity with a rhetorical tradition, "The only difference", now everyone's really listening. "The only difference about this kind of death — it'll be reciprocal". And the audience would explode.

"Reciprocal". I have heard this curse: May the last and ugliest dog save his polluted urine to water the filth of Rockefeller's grave.

Ballots or bullets. "If you're afraid to use an expression like that, you should get out of the country, you should get back to the cotton patch, you should get back in the alley". Attica is a slave plantation, the guards watch the quarters. Outsiders have a license.

Right here in Harlem, in New York City, we need a Mau Mau".

The talk at the tables is careful, subdued, dignified, as inmates choose to share their experience with a visitor. A man in dreadlocks, a Rasta man, says that he feels about Bob Marley's death the way many felt about John Lennon's. "We have a class analysis", he says, "not a race analysis.

"When I saw that they put a skull and crossbones on Marxism-Leninism, I decided then and there that's what I wanted to study", explains a militant.

A scholar wants to know what I think of Harry Braverman's book on the labor process or of Brenner's contribution to the debate on the transition from feudalism to capitalism.

"You can't see those youth over there. That's a working class that puts its theory into practice. They're taking care of business. It's not

So: a college professor explains why he calls Malcolm a "Black revolutionary warrior". What does it mean to say that he was "Black". It means that he's the heir of the most oppressed of three centuries, that he's part of the cutting edge of the liberation of the Third World, that today his name is on the lips of Soweto. What does it mean to say that he was "revolutionary"? It means that he could make the oppressor appear puny and ridiculous. It means that he could make us seem like a rising giant, and a cunning one. "We pray that our African brothers have not freed themselves of European colonialism only to be overcome and held in check by American dollarism", he'd warn. What does it mean to say that Malcolm was a "warrior"? It means that he was clear in his objective, responsive to his followers, creative in his thinking, and always audacious. "In Mississippi we need a Mau Mau. In Alabama we need a Mau Mau. In Georgia we need a Mau Mau.

a racial problem. It's a class problem. I give credit to the parties in Brixton, says another.

"Like man, I'm a Christian. I don't have the time for the Afro-American Cultural Studies Group", says a dissident.

A poet rises and takes to the stool in stage center. He is accompanied by two bongos and a guitar. He sings of Stackolee and the Rehabilitation Brother". The prison rebel tradition of the toast, as BAAAAD as poetry can be, is transformed by the poet into rattling chains of scorn and ridicule for the con-artists of rehabilitation. The poet sings his song of praise for Malcolm. Trumpet notes to the slain. There is a beautiful hymn to "Umodja" - unity. He recites with fervent passion, and concludes: "Prison serves no purpose WHAT-SO-EVER.

We eat prison grub: all starch and sugar. However, ther's some wonderful rice, truly fine, a well and hotly seasoned pilaf. A couple of pola-

roids have been produced and everyone's getting
in line to have their picture taken with one of
the dancers from Buffalo. "I wish they had per-
formed a war dance", a brother mutters.

Reverend John S. Walker, known as Talik to the
brothers, is a tireless, learned, dedicated as-
vocate of prison reform and freedom for the Afro-
American people. He gives a final speech. Of
the music, the rice, the dancers, he tells
praises. Then he gets down to business. He has
a warning. Black communities across the nation
re weak, powerless, and incorrectly politicized.
"We must begin to think of ourselves as van-
guards", he suggests, "practicing the collective
leadership that the A.A.C.S.G. exemplifies and
accepting the responsibilities that leadership
entails". Since 1965 the strategy has been to
eradicate black and poor people from the streets.
"The brothers from the joint cannot return to
the communities with negative criminal activi-
ty. Black ex-offenders have not organized
to eliminate the situation in Atlanta. Our
communties need you and we need to know that
when you return to us that what you say is sho'
'nuff". He concluded with the story of Gideon
who preferred 300 fighters to 10,000 lame ducks.
It was a powerful speech and a hundred pairs of
hands applauded it hard.

Malcolm. Always outragoeus, always pushing,
daring, goading, taking your breath away with
undreamed of possibilities. "Stop singing and
start swinging". he's challenge the Civil Rights
marchers. Just when you thought you were getting
somewhere.

All of us sang the rolling hymn of James
Weldon Johnson's "Lift Every Voice and Sing".
We sang the first verse and the third verse.
The middle verse was printed on the program,
only we were quite distinctly told not to sing
it. So, here's what it says:

> *Stormy the road we trod,*
> *Bitter the chastening rod,*
> *Felt in the days when hope unborn*
> *   had died;*
> *Yet with a steady beat,*
> *Have not our weary feet come to the*
> *   place for which our fathers sighed?*
> *We have have come over a way that with tears*
> *   has been watered.*
> *We have come treading our path through the*
> *   blood of the slaughtered;*
> *Out from the gloomy past,*
> *Till now we stand at last were the white*
> *Gleam of our bright star is cast.*

A spokesman for the A.A.C.S.G. delivers, fi-
nally, the wisdom of the joint. "Crime is ille-
gitimate capitalism. The capitalists are the
most violent group of people in the whole
world. Capitalism is the real terrorism. That
is what we have to prevent". It's true: besides
the H-bomb makers, about the only business that's
thriving now is the prison-construction business.
"We need your help, the help of the community",
he says. "It's like the sardine reforming the
can: it can't be done on the inside".
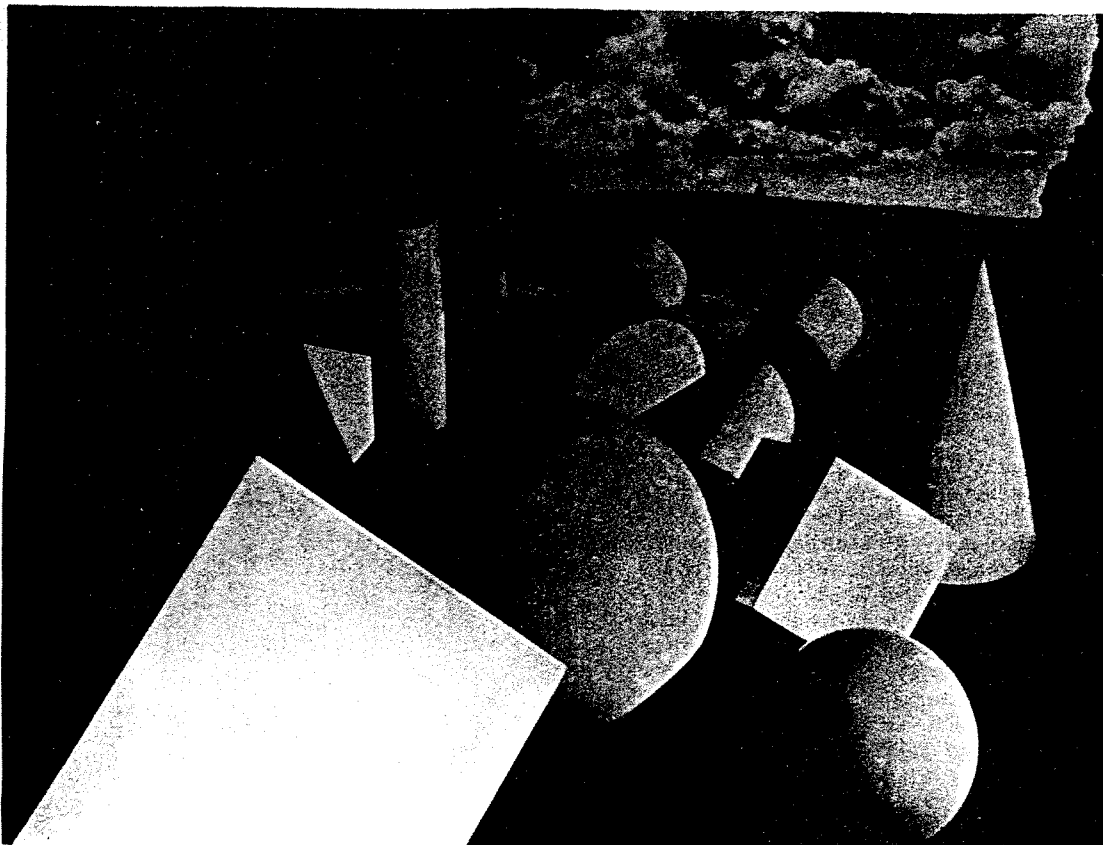
¿Quien Salvara El Salvador?

Who Will Save The Savior?

This spring, CISPES and other groups will be calling another series of demonstrations. They will be the n-th, the n+1st, demos on El Salvador in addition to the hundreds of rallies held throughout last year all over the U.S. Once again, as on May 3rd 1981, people will congregate from every part of the country, spend (collectively) millions of dollars, nights of sleep, march, long hours of bus shock, to partecipate in an event which, as last year's experience has taught us, will have at best a purely symbolic effect. Haven't we learned yet? Demonstrations in Washington will not stop the US build up and intervention in El Salvador.

It is certainly nice to get together with people all over the country, exchange news about what's happening back home, take some literature that will come in handy at seminars, teach-ins, etc. Most important, excuse the irony, it's nice to have the feeling you are doing something. But are we really? Take last year: thousands of people poured into Washington, millions of words and slogans were written, screamed and chanted, most often reaching ears already convinced -- and yet what did we gain except feeling good about ourselves, keeping alive the impression that we are doing something?

The state hawks clearly were not very impressed by our effort; their main response was to escalate the war. Meanwhile, in El Salvador twenty thousand people were butchered. In fact, one had the experience of a total schizophrenia. One day you march with your placard: "Imperialism won't pass", "La lucha continua", etc. Next, you read in the paper about the massacre of hundreds of Salvadorean refugees in Honduras, the mutilations and tortures, as if the war and our demonstrations each went their own way: Americans marching to Washington, Salvadoreans dying, we march, they die, march and die. Even in the battle to prevent deportations we have failed to reach any success.

Is this simply because the US state and capital are "too strong" or is it the case that there is something wrong, badly insufficient, almost non-serious, with our strategies and tactics? Why in fact should the State Department worry about all our marches on Washington on Saturdays and Sundays when nobody is there and we couldn't disturb the hair on one dead-bureaucrat's head? They are so confident in our ineffectuality they don't even send the police openly any longer (see May 3rd) to keep us in line. Indeed, they can only be happy that we channel our frustration and potential explosiveness in such innocent and innocuous ways-- we engage in "celebrations of solidarity", but not in occasions to discuss what this would mean in practice. They must be happy indeed that we spend our energies and our money-

-our precious and decreasing movement resources-- to hear repeated (many times) from a podium the same facts and ideas that got us going in the first place (plus the invariable Pete Seeger). What a perfect method of neutralization. They would, however, be very upset if instead of Washington we marched on week days in the shipyards and airports where the helicopters leave for El Salvador, or on the factories where they are built.
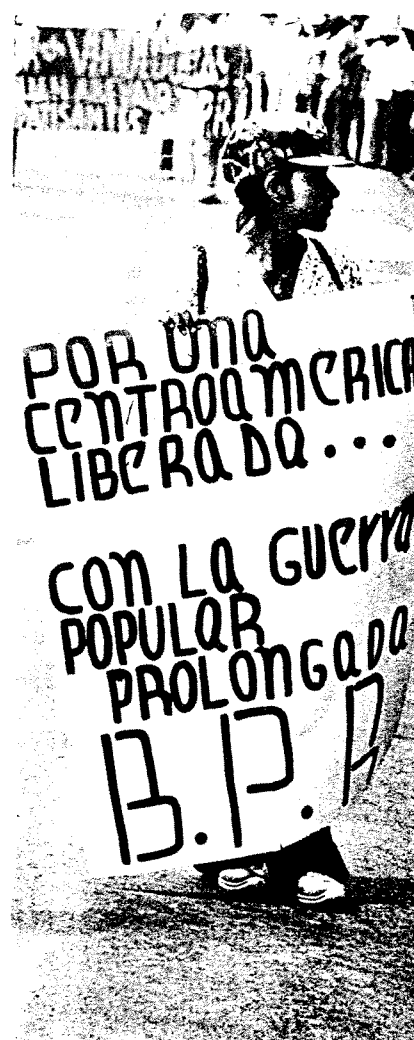
As we all know, American intervention in El Salvador is not made of words and ideas but is a very material process, made of guns, rockets, bombs, jets, gunships, welders, assembly lines, trucks, ships, air freight haulers, CIA and mili

tary advisors and, possibly soon, even us as draftees. Why then demonstrate in Washington and not in the factories, ship yards, airports and recruitment stations where the helicopter gun ships are built, shipped, assembled, packed and Manned? So why go to a dead city on Sunday and not on Monday talk to workers that are doing the producing, packing and shipping?

We learned from the 60's that it was not our words that troubled the Pentagon. If the anti-war movement had success in disrupting US involvement in Viet Nam this is because we did much more than simply march on Washington to inform the country of our moral outrage. We burnt draft cards, occupied ROTC buildings, left the country for Europe or Canada instead of being inducted for Nam duty. We never took the "winter palace", but our actions were a continuous nuisance, a continuous material drain for Pentagon and Co.. By forcing continuous breaks, preventing the wheel from grinding on, we were an inspiration to people all over the world.

Today the success and the impact of the European anti-war movement on even the US war mongers is based on the same process. For example, recently the movement physically blocked attempts by the US to widen and lengthen an airfield in Germany in order to make it ready to receive the new missiles they are planning to base there in 1983. The movement was able to draw in many people who saw in the concrete act against the war planning and draft the connection between general nuclear death and the daily death people around the airport suffer from: the pollution, jet noise, shrinking space.

But why can't we do the same now? Why not investigate what are the material links, the bridges of repression between the US and El Salvador, where we can direct our action: making, and intervention? Why can't we find out where the helicopters are built and shipped, how we can prevent it, how we can involve the workers who are doing it? Can't we make everyone confront the fact that they are participating in murder? Trouble their sleep? Put on the map these isolated "innocent" towns where the weapons are built, say theirs es and show them to be American Auschwitz? Harbor refugees and prevent them from being deported and block the airplanes that attempt to take them back. This is not marching in Washington on a Sunday afternoon", but it is what will help the Salvadorean people avoid an American slaughter. By failing to practice these sorts of actions, not only will our demos be ineffective and wasted (dissipating our energies for nothing), but we won't be able to avoid being accomplices, by virtue of our passivity and lack of action, when faced with a slaughter.

We know that we are not along in feeling that we cannot repeat the same thing as last spring, and that current tactics lead us nowhere. The stakes are getting higher and higher. As Haig, Weinberger and Reagan have made it clear: this is a question of life and death, there is no return for anybody in this war. Not for the US state who is testing here its ability to control and exploit Latin America and further its ability to suppress any dissent at home: not for the Salvadorean people for whom the only alternative is either victory or genocide, and not for us, who

Members of the people's revolutionary militia

if we accept Salvador will accept everything. We too are being tested in El Salvador. For the government knows that if we accept this, we are ready to accept even a nuclear war.

It is time then to move not just with our feet, in yet another m   but move politically by finding the raw   of the apparatus of repression and transferring our activity directly on the   the problem is in Tulsa, act in Tulsa, not   in front of the UN. "Acting in Tulsa" means the following:

-Find out the unions that are involved in   and shipping arms to El Salvador, - at the meetings.
-Talk to the women in these areas, show them the pictures, the facts, and not just on the campuses.
-Name the plants and shipping points with graffitti, stickers, etc..
-Put obstacles in the flow of production and transport.
-Make the connection between accepting death as a way to make a living, accepting to become a murderer in exchange for a wage, pay the rent with the blood of people who haven't done anything to you and accepting a job that you know will kill you and may even kill your children as well.
-Bring the attention of the media to the towns that are now living on the death of the Salvadorean people, bring Salvadoreans to these places and talk to the workers, and ask them not to butcher their kids, etc.

This is by no means a complete list, but it is only down this path, which is no guarantee of victory, that a real possibility lies. Continuing the old path is a guarantee of defeat.

Central Control Device